

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1866.

THE CAMPAIGN IN ITALY.

BY EDWARD DICEY.

FROM the window of the room where I now am writing I look out on one of the narrow winding streets of the city of Milan. It is evening ; the heat of the day has passed away ; the deep shadows of night have fallen over the sun-burnt, sun-baked town ; the shutters of the countless windows which line the high houses opposite, whose overhanging eaves cover half the street, are thrown open, for the first time since sunrise, to catch the faint breeze wafted hither from the Alpine mountains ; the street is full ; the shops are lighted up ; groups of people are sitting in front of the doorways, chatting and smoking. The scene, in fact, is such as you may witness any summer night in Milan, in any street of the Lombard capital. The only reason why I dwell upon it is that to-night is different in one respect from other nights. About everybody whose face you look at amidst the passers-by there is an air of sadness ; the chatter of street-talk is more subdued than usual ; the flags, with which well-nigh every house is ornamented since the outbreak of the war, have been taken indoors ; the bands of music, which patrol the town, seem to have abandoned for the night their usual selection of patriotic airs ; in fact, a general gloom hangs over the city. And yet this is the night on which the dream of ages has been accomplished —on which the aspirations of so many

generations of martyrs have been fulfilled ; on which Italy has been made one country from the Alps to the Adriatic ; on which, in short, Austria has announced her intention of ceding Venetia without a further struggle.

It is my wish to explain this apparent anomaly in this article. I had thought, when I first purposed writing to you, that I should have to speak of the prospects of the campaign, so lately begun, so suddenly and strangely interrupted. But now, I find, I have to write of the campaign almost as a past event, as a finished chapter in the annals of Italy. It would be idle to enter on conjectures concerning the progress of negotiations, which may be concluded or broken off long before these lines appear in print ; but thus much may, I think, be safely predicted—that for the present, as far as Italy is concerned, the war is well-nigh over. There must be two combatants to make a war ; and, when Austria has declared her readiness to evacuate her Transalpine possessions, any question as to the details of the cession is not likely to be made a *casus belli*. In politics, as in religion, people strain at a gnat who swallow a camel ; but, when they have once made up their minds that it is essential for their comfort or interest to swallow the camel, they only strain at the gnat for the sake of outward appearances.

Under these circumstances, I can write more freely with regard to the real condition of Italy, her achievements in the war, and her prospects in the future, than I could have done while war was actually waging. The case for Italy is, in my judgment, a very strong one ; no harm can be done to it now by confessing in what respects it was comparatively weak. Let me speak first, then, of the outbreak of the war. In England, the readiness with which Italy accepted the co-operation of Prussia in her attack on Austria was regarded by many persons, not unfriendly to the Italian cause, as not only a blunder, but a crime. In order to appreciate what I am convinced is the truth—that, whether right or wrong, wise or foolish, Italy had no option, except to join Prussia—it is necessary to recall very briefly the history of the last five years. The annexation of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies formed, it should be remembered, no part of the programme entered into at Plombières, or even of the corollaries which Count Cavour had mentally added to that famous compact. The great Piedmontese statesman was a firm believer in Machiavelli's adage—that Italy was an artichoke which, to be digested, must be eaten leaf by leaf. It is now a matter of notoriety, as far as such things can be certain, that what Cavour contemplated, when he concluded the Franco-Italian alliance, was the expulsion of the Austrians from the Peninsula, and the formation of an Upper Italian kingdom, consisting of Piedmont, Lombardy, and Venetia. The immediate advantages of such a scheme were obvious ; the new kingdom would easily have been consolidated, being occupied by races very kindred to each other, with common interests, and equally advanced in the scale of civilization. In the course of a few years Cavour could have safely reckoned on Piedmontizing the Lombardo-Venetian provinces, in the sense in which he understood that much-abused word—that is, he would have succeeded in training them to understand and cherish those free parliamentary institutions

which, under his auspices, had taken such firm root in the old provinces of the kingdom. Nor were what I may call the contingent advantages of the scheme less manifest. If once there was an end of the Austrian occupation of the Peninsula, and, with it, of the influence which had rendered the minor states mere satrapies of the House of Hapsburg, the free, prosperous, powerful constitutional kingdom of Upper Italy would become not only the dominant power in the Peninsula, but the necessary basis of any united Italy. In the course of years the Duchies, Tuscany, the Romagna, and ultimately the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, would have been absorbed without difficulty by the mere force of attraction. Cavour was himself in no hurry to complete the unification of Italy. Unfortunately the treaty of Villafranca rendered the execution of this scheme an impossibility. Austria was still left mistress of Venetia, and in possession of the Quadrilateral, which gave her the command of Italy. Sardinia, augmented by Lombardy, was even more powerless against Austria than she was before the war, and could only hope to retain her new possessions under the guarantee of Napoleon III. In order to remedy this fatal error, Cavour, by a variety of manœuvres, succeeded in adding to the dominions of the new state the Duchies, the Romagna, and Tuscany. Out of these states he hoped to found a homogeneous kingdom, strong enough to counterbalance the authority of Austria at Rome and Naples. This scheme was again upset by the Garibaldian invasion of the Two Sicilies, an enterprise which the great Sardinian statesman turned to the best advantage, but of which he disapproved as a matter of policy. Whether the incorporation of the old Neapolitan kingdom was a permanent benefit or detriment to the cause of an united Italy, time alone can show. The most fervent, however, of Garibaldi's admirers can scarcely deny that, up to the present, the tenure of the Southern provinces has been a source of weakness, not of strength, to the common country.

Thus, when Cavour was suddenly

removed by death, the task he left to his successors was well-nigh Herculean. Northern Italy, threatened in its integrity and existence by the Austrian possession of Venetia, divided by local jealousies and historical traditions, was called upon to govern, under the same principles of constitutional government which she had adopted for herself, the provinces of the south, occupied by a population centuries behind her in civilization, utterly untrained to freedom, demoralized by a system of government to which no parallel could be found in modern Europe. We have heard a great deal about the blunders and shortcomings of the different ministers who have ruled Italy since the death of Cavour. Probably, with the single exception of poor Farini, they were none of them men of any very singular ability; but my constant wonder is that they have effected so much, not that they have failed to achieve more. Their chief merit was that they left things alone. Six years of free political and social life have taught the Italians to realize in fact as well as theory the manifold advantages of belonging to one great community, instead of being divided amongst a number of small and insignificant states. It is perfectly marvellous to any one who, like the writer, has returned to Italy after the absence of some years, to see how rapid has been the growth of assimilation between the northern and central provinces, and to observe how the distinctive character which belonged to the various states has lost the sharpness of its outline. As far as this result is due to anything beyond the rapid though indefinable action of common laws, common tariffs, common liberties, and common duties, it must be ascribed to two causes. The first is the immense development of railroads in the Peninsula,—a development by which local divisions have been well-nigh obliterated. The second is, strange to say, the presence of Austria in Italy. Had Venetia fallen into the hands of the Italians immediately after the premature annexation of the Two Sicilies, the chances are, I think, that

the new kingdom would have been a shortlived one. The centrifugal forces, if I may use the term, which tended to create division were uncommonly powerful. The rule of Piedmont was unpopular at first; affection for the dynasty there was and could be none; the benefits of constitutional government were very little understood; and the sympathies of the most energetic political party in the country, the party of action, were in favour of republican institutions. After Aspromonte, for instance, there would have been a revolution in Italy, had it not been that Austria was encamped within the Quadrilateral. The knowledge that any internal dissensions would afford a plea for foreign intervention, and that the Austrian armies were always within two days' march of Milan, or Turin, or Florence, put a curb on all outbreaks of political passion or sectional animosity.

Moreover, one of the most potent agencies in welding Italy together has been the existence of the national army; and this army could scarcely have been created unless the Italians had felt it was essential for their national independence to keep on foot an army capable of holding its own against an Austrian invasion. It is very frequently asserted in England, that this apprehension could not be seriously entertained, and that Austria had no intention of attacking Italy. Ever since Solferino the Hapsburg empire has been too much out of joint to dream of attacking anybody; but, if Italy suspected Austria of simply biding her time, Austria has nobody to blame except herself. Up to the present hour she has refused to recognise the existence of Italy; she has never renounced her formal claim to Lombardy. She still styles her dominions the Regno Lombardo-Veneto; she has gone on, year after year, spending enormous sums on the strengthening of her fortresses, situated in the very gate of the Peninsula; she has never lost an opportunity of expressing a contempt for the Italians, and declaring, that, singly, she could beat them with the greatest ease. She has acted, in

fact, exactly as she would have done if her deliberate purpose had been to restore her old dominion in Italy at the first favourable conjuncture. Whether justly or unjustly, the Italians believed that Austria was their inveterate and persistent enemy ; and on this belief they acted.

If I am asked whether Austria had no reason to apprehend being attacked herself in Venetia, I admit quite freely that she had. No concessions on her part could ever have made her rule tolerable to the Venetians ; no reduction of her army would have reconciled the Italians to the idea of allowing Venice to remain German territory. The plain truth is, that the existence of Italy as a united kingdom, under a free popular government, was inconsistent with the occupation of Venetia by Austria. There was not room for both of them within the Peninsula, and both had to arm against each other in self-defence. I can quite understand the reluctance of the Austrians to give up what they regarded as their own ; and I think any candid person will admit that to have surrendered Venetia out of any abstract deference to Italian interests would have been an act of magnanimity not to be expected from a nation. But, on the other hand, I think the reasons which compelled the Italians to claim Venetia as a necessity of national existence were infinitely more intelligible, and of a far less interested character.

Thus the period which elapsed from 1860 to 1866 was in reality nothing but an armed truce between Austria and Italy. Both believed that the other was only waiting for an opportunity to attack, and acted accordingly. To do the Italian government justice, it never concealed for one moment its resolve to gain possession of Venetia at the first favourable occasion. No ministry could have held power which professed a contrary intention : and it was solely in virtue of the confidence entertained by the nation that these pledges would be kept that the nation consented to wait so long. Meanwhile, in order to be ready for action, Italy exhausted her resources

upon military expenditure. The incubus of an enormous standing army—utterly disproportioned to her wealth, and to her industrial development—weighed down the country, checked her progress, and reduced her to a financial position which threatened to become desperate. Every year aggravated the evil ; and every year made the Italians more eager to reap the fruits of their self-sacrifice and patience.

At last, after years of hope deferred, the opportunity came. It would be utterly beyond my purpose to say anything as to the merits of the Austro-Prussian quarrel. Moreover, it is too early to express much opinion about it. Public opinion in England has been wrong so very often of late about foreign questions that we may possibly find out our sympathy with Austria was unreasonable, and little justified by the event. However, I do not suppose that any rational person ever imagined the Italians were incapacitated from allying themselves with Prussia because Herr von Bismarck's domestic policy was not favourable to parliamentary institutions. When we made war upon the first Napoleon, I suppose few thought of troubling themselves about the internal institutions of the Muscovite Empire ; and, when we invaded the Crimea, I never recollect that the fact of France being governed on Imperialist principles was used as an objection to our forming an alliance with Napoleon III. I suspect that, whenever we have such a high code of public morality that no nation will ally herself with any other against a common enemy, unless that ally's record is irreproachable, the world will be too wise to go to war at all. So I think all considerations of the equity of the Prusso-Italian alliance may be dismissed for the present. Each nation must be judged by the justice of its own cause, taken singly.

In the same way it seems to me futile to discuss whether Austria or Italy was the first to commence hostile preparations. The relations between the two countries—relations, it should be remembered, which were the result of long

years of enmity, of oppression on one side and rancour on the other—were such that both Austria and Italy could not but suspect each other even without any immediate cause. As a matter of fact, I have very strong reason for believing that Italy had made no exceptional or extraordinary preparations for war till the Austrians began to concentrate their forces in Venetia, three months ago. For the moment, the attention of the Florentine Government was directed to Rome rather than Venice; and the idea of a contest with Austria had been adjourned till after the expected settlement of the Papal question. But it is equally true that the normal condition of Italy was, and has been ever since 1860, one of preparation for war against Austria. No doubt the real reason why Italy resolved on war in the present year was because she believed Austria was about to invade her dominions at once. Of all times for such an attempt the least likely to be chosen was one during which the empire was threatened with a Prussian war. The actual cause of the war on the part of Italy, whatever may have been its original pretext, was the conviction that the time had come when Italy could complete her independence, and expel the hated foreigner from Italian soil.

So much for the causes of the war. The House of Savoy—even if its head had been personally disposed for peace—had no option except to carry out the will of the nation. To be the champion of an independent and united Italy was, as it were, the charter on which its right to the throne was based. A sovereign of the House of Hanover might as well attempt to re-establish the Catholic religion in England, as a sovereign of the House of Savoy attempt to forgo any occasion of driving the Austrians out of the Peninsula. From the day when the Government disclosed its willingness to seize the golden opportunity, the nation rallied round it with a marvellous enthusiasm. In the Northern States of America it was the fashion of the day to call the outburst of energy and patriotism,

which ensued on the attack on Fort Sumter, the “uprising of a great people.” The term, hyperbolical as it is, was applied justly enough to the outbreak of the war in America; and it might be applied with equal justice to the ardour of the Italian nation in 1866. At once, all political divisions were forgotten; all local jealousies laid aside. The history of the fusion between all parties, which is so remarkable at this moment, might be epitomized by the fact that Garibaldi and La Marmora, the representatives of the Revolution and the Monarchy, made common cause. Between the army and the great guerrilla chief there stood the memories of Aspromonte, and yet there was no need for apology on one side or the other. Whatever might be their difference of opinion on political matters, neither La Marmora nor Garibaldi doubted that the other was sincere in his desire to free Italy from the presence of the stranger; and this conviction enabled them to act together. From all parts of the country the Government was urged to draw unsparingly upon the national resources. The one sole condition insisted upon by public opinion was that the war should be conducted by Italy alone, without foreign aid or subsidies. This enthusiasm may have been unreasonable—that is a matter of opinion; but two facts cannot well be denied; and these are that the Italians knew thoroughly well what war meant, and, knowing it, desired war. It was not the case of a nation to whom war was known by tradition only, and which was intoxicated by dreams of martial glory. On the contrary, there was scarcely a lad in Italy old enough to carry arms who did not know what war meant in sad earnest. Men who had fought beneath Charles Albert were as eager for the war as men who were boys at school when last the sound of cannon was heard within the Peninsula. The great commercial cities like Milan, and Leghorn, and Genoa, cities to whose industry war was always injurious, were almost the first to raise the cry for war.

Nor was this outburst of national en-

thusiasm confined to words or addresses. The nation submitted gladly to any sacrifice imposed upon it. Within the space of three months the regular army was raised to the amount of some half a million of men. Taking the population of Italy at twenty-two millions, and excluding women and boys under fifteen, we come to the astonishing result, that one out of every eleven able-bodied men was enlisted in the army. It should be remembered, too, that these men were not, like our English private soldiers, taken exclusively from the lowest class of the population. Drawn by conscription, they were, in a vast majority of instances, men of a certain amount of property and education,—men for whom military service had no attractions in itself. Yet, even in the southern provinces, this conscription was enforced without difficulty. The proportion of conscripts who failed to present themselves for service of their own accord was exceedingly small : I have been told not above five per cent. Nor did the demands of the Government exhaust the military ardour of the nation. The enrolment of volunteers was a measure absolutely forced upon the ministry by popular pressure ; the moment that Garibaldi received permission to raise volunteers, recruits flocked to his standard in such numbers that the offices had to be closed. After twenty thousand had enlisted within two or three days, as many more had to be added to the levy ; not because they were wanted, but simply because the public demand for permission to enlist was too powerful to be resisted. Tomorrow, if there was a call for volunteers, their number could be raised easily to a hundred thousand. Now, I have not the slightest desire to depreciate the heroism of our own volunteers, but it would be idle to say that the sacrifices they have made for the service of their country could be compared with those made by the thousands of young men of fortune and family who flocked at once to take service under Garibaldi. Nobody, who has not seen camp life in actual warfare, has any notion of its

unutterable nastiness, especially in hot countries. To walk for hours under a broiling sun, footsore and thirsty ; to have very little to drink, and still less to eat ; to be obliged to sleep, night after night, amidst dirt and vermin, in company with men unaccustomed to cleanliness ; to have to associate on equal terms with comrades without a tincture of education :—these were some of the hardships which the Garibaldian volunteers not only agreed to submit to, but have, in fact, submitted to readily. And this is the more remarkable, because a passion for adventure is certainly not a national characteristic of the youth of Italy. In fact, a more luxurious or self-indulgent set of men than well-to-do young Italians it would be difficult, I think, to find anywhere ; and yet, as a class, they deserted the cafés, and gardens, and ballrooms, where their life was spent in lounging, as soon as they found that soldiers were needed to fight for Italy. Nor was it discomfort only the volunteers had to dread. At the outbreak of the war it was confidently believed that the Garibaldians would be employed in a most hazardous invasion of the Tyrol and of Dalmatia. Ill-armed and undisciplined as they knew themselves to be, they believed they were to engage in battle with one of the finest of European armies, in positions where retreat would be impossible, and where, in the event of capture, it was doubtful if they would be even regarded as prisoners of war. How far they would have stood the test of actual warfare is of course an open question ; but there can be no dispute as to the courage with which they faced the prospect of peril.

Thus, at the outset of the war, the Italian Government had three immense advantages. It had a very large army ; it had an almost unlimited power of recruitment amongst a patriotic population ; and it was supported by the enthusiasm of a great nation ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of prosecuting the war. The same advantages were enjoyed by the Federal Government in its contest with the South, and history

has shown how they finally secured the triumph of the Union cause. But all these advantages failed to win immediate success, and were for a long time counterbalanced by the absence of military training. Now, in my judgment, the army with which Italy entered on her third war against Austria had many of the defects which characterised the armies defeated at Bull Run and on the Chickahominy. Upon paper it was a magnificent army. Including the volunteers, there could not have been less than 500,000 men under arms in the pay of the Italian Government; but numbers alone are not sufficient to constitute an army. Though hitherto, with the one exception of the battle of Custoza, the Italian soldiers have had no opportunity of showing their metal, I think no impartial judge can doubt their individual courage. The more I see of different nations, the more I come to the conclusion that the quantities of latent virtue, energy, and courage distributed by nature are very much more equal than is commonly supposed. With nations, as with individuals, circumstances have far more influence upon character than any innate attributes of race or lineage. The Italians have all the requisite ingredients for the formation of excellent soldiers, but hitherto these ingredients have been, to a certain extent, neutralized by unfavourable circumstances. The organization of the army was necessarily entrusted to the old Piedmontese officers, of whom General La Marmora may be taken as a type. Trained in the traditions of a brave but martinet aristocratic army, they have never been able to adapt themselves to the requirements of the great popular movement of which the Italian army was the offspring. Excellent as drill-sergeants, they were not fitted for field-officers. On the other hand, if the command of the army, as I think, was given over to men who attached undue importance to military discipline, the nation, from whose ranks the army was composed, were disposed to under-estimate its importance. Garibaldi's extraordinary discomfiture of the

Neapolitan army by undisciplined volunteers had created an impression that courage alone could effect anything. The mistake was a natural one enough. It is no disparagement to Garibaldi's exploits to say, that his triumphs showed only how much can be effected by moral courage. Half a dozen policeman may disperse a crowd of thousands by marching boldly forwards; but it would be folly to argue that the same result would be obtained by the same process, if the crowd were armed and organized. Yet a delusion of this kind was very common amidst the Italians. That disciplined troops, batteries, and even fortresses could afford no insurmountable obstacle to the onslaught of men determined to conquer or die, was a received article of faith in the Peninsula. The Italians knew their own courage, and, knowing it, could not believe defeat was possible. Hence, on the one hand, there was a great army imperfectly organized, inefficiently armed, commanded by officers trained in an unfavourable school; on the other, there was a nation impatient for war, confident of success, and indisposed to listen to cautious counsels. Given these data, a man of genius was required to conduct the war at once to a successful issue; and, though the hour was there, the man was not forthcoming. Victor Emmanuel was brave and fond of fighting, but he neither was, nor aspired to be, anything more than the first soldier of Italy. Ricasoli had not the military knowledge; Garibaldi had not the political ability to assume a national dictatorship; La Marmora was at the best a good general of division; and Cialdini had done nothing to establish his claim to high military repute.

Then, too, the enterprise which Italy was called on to perform was one of no common magnitude. From the time when the outbreak of the war became a matter of certainty, it also became clear that Austria would carry on a defensive warfare south of the Alps, and confine herself within her strongholds. If Italy, therefore, was to do anything on her own account, it must be by invading

Venetia. Yet never was there a country less open to rapid invasion. On the north the Alps, on the south the Po, on the east the lagoons, on the west the Quadrilateral defended it from attack. The province consisted, roughly speaking of a flat, marshy space, studded over with fortresses. To besiege any one of these fortresses was a work involving, even if successful, heavy loss of lives and treasure, and, above all, of time. Yet, so long as these fortresses remained in the hands of the enemy, any incursion into Venetian territory must be attended with the gravest danger, and could produce no decisive result. Great expectations were entertained, at the outset, of the aid that was to be rendered to the regular army by the operations of the fleet and the raids of the Garibaldian volunteers. These expectations were not fulfilled; but, even if they had been, the bombardment of Pola or Trieste, or the capture of an Austrian ammunition train in the Tyrol, however gratifying to the Italians, could not have affected the fate of the Quadrilateral. The marvellous system of fortifications, extending over the whole of Venetia, and of which Verona may be considered the key-stone, constituted the real support of the Austrian dominions in Italy. As 1849 proved, in a manner which no Sardinian officer, at any rate, was likely to have forgotten, the occupation of the province itself was of no value if Verona remained untaken. Probably, if the whole campaign against Austria had been directed by one head with a sole view to military success, the Italian army would have been directed not to enter Venetia at all, but simply to invest the fortresses, so as to compel the Austrians to keep a large force locked up south of the Alps, and to avoid any serious engagement, unless the Austrians deserted their almost impregnable position within the Quadrilateral.

But, whatever advantage there might have been in such a policy of inaction, it was one which the Italians could not possibly adopt. The Government could not reckon beforehand on the over-

whelming success of the Prussians, nor was it disposed to place implicit confidence in the resolution of Prussia to consider the cause of Italy her own. Moreover, even if the Government had privately been in favour of refraining from offensive operations, it could not have carried out its views without a revolution. The popular instinct, which in such cases is rarely wrong, told the Italians they must fight if they wanted to be free. I believe, if the chances against their success had been infinitely greater than they were, the cry of the nation would still have been for war. As it was, the difficulties of expelling the Austrians from Venetia were immensely underrated; and, if the Royal Government had shown any hesitation, the initiative of commencing war would have been taken out of their hands by Garibaldi and his volunteers. Any suggestion that foreign aid might be necessary to the completion of the war, was held to be dictated by hostile sentiments. "L'Italia farà da sé," was the cry of Italians of all classes and politics from the Alps to the Straits of Messina.

Thus everybody was agreed that something must be done: but what that something was to be was not so easy to discover. If ever the full history of the period that immediately preceded the declaration of the war in Italy be fully known, I believe it will be found that no scheme of action was finally agreed upon till very shortly before the commencement of hostilities. General La Marmora, the then Premier, was extremely anxious to retain the whole conduct of civil and military affairs within his own hands; the King, who shared the general's political views, and believed in his military ability, favoured the idea. It was, however, strongly opposed by popular opinion, and by Baron Ricasoli, whose parliamentary influence was too great to be disregarded under a constitutional government. At last, after some resistance, the king and the general gave way, and Ricasoli returned to power as Premier, while La Marmora was supposed to devote himself entirely to the direction of the war. The first

act almost of an official kind that the new Premier had to perform was to sign the proclamation of war against Austria ; and then, I fancy, and not till then, a general scheme was agreed upon for the opening of the campaign. From various indications the general outline of this plan may be literally well ascertained. Cialdini, at the head of the Fourth Corps, numbering some 100,000 men, and consisting of picked regiments, who had served under him in Southern Italy, was to invade Venetia at its eastern or Adriatic side. Crossing the Po near Ferrara, he was to have marched parallel to the coast and entrenched himself upon the Verona and Padua railroad. If this movement had been successful, he would have secured the main communication between the Quadrilateral and Germany, and would have been able to invest Venice from the mainland. If an Italian army was to venture within Venetia at all, there was no point at which the invasion could be effected with so little risk as along the line of route which Cialdini was to have traversed. It lay beyond easy reach of the Quadrilateral, and, with the exception of any army the Italians might meet in the open field, the only known obstacle to their advance consisted in the fortifications of Rovigo, which were not supposed to be of great strength. Opposed to anything like equal numbers, Cialdini's army was deemed certain of success ; and the whole scheme was based on the idea that, by the movements of the other Italian forces, the Austrians would be precluded from using the bulk of their army against Cialdini. It was therefore intended that, simultaneously with Cialdini's passage of the Po, the main body of the army under General La Marmora and the King, numbering 200,000 men, should make a demonstration against the Quadrilateral ; that the fleet under Persano should sail along the coast, and either attack the forts of Venice, or else land an expedition near the City of the Lagoons ; and that Garibaldi with his volunteers should march through the Tyrol, occupy the railroad between

Verona and Botzen, and descend upon Venetia through some of the Tyrolean valleys. I believe myself that all the rumours of the intended bombardment of Pola, or of the proposed invasion of Dalmatia, were purposely encouraged in order to divert the attention of the enemy from the real plan of the campaign.

Could this original scheme have been carried out in its entirety, it might very possibly have proved successful. Unfortunately, the volunteers were not ready for action, owing to their being unprovided with arms ; and the fleet, for some less intelligible reason, was unable to take any active part in the operation. To do the Italian authorities justice, they acted with decision and promptitude. On the 20th of June war was proclaimed ; on the following morning the King left for head-quarters : and on Saturday, the 23rd, the Italian army crossed the Mincio under La Marmora, while Cialdini's force commenced the passage of the Po near Ferrara. On the right of the Italian army everything went well. Cialdini experienced no opposition in throwing bridges across the Po. On the early mornings of Saturday and Sunday the advance-guard of his army took up their position on Venetian territory ; and by Monday morning—as I may state with certainty—the whole of his army would have been across the river and marching northwards. On the left, however, things had not proceeded so favourably. The true history of military operations is seldom known till long after the event ; more especially when they have proved unsuccessful. My explanation, therefore, of the movements which led to the disastrous battle of Custoza must be taken for what it is worth as a surmise. In spite of all the official statements which have appeared on the subject, I believe the passage of the Mincio was intended originally to be nothing but a demonstration. The presence of the army on Venetian soil would satisfy the popular demand for immediate action, while its proximity to the Quadrilateral would deter the Austrians from detaching any large body

of troops to oppose Cialdini. In fact, the real object of the movement was to cover Cialdini's advance. Unfortunately, this object was abandoned for one infinitely less feasible. By some extraordinary and unexplained oversight, the Italian army was entirely misinformed as to the position of the enemy. After the passage of the Mincio intelligence was received at head-quarters, deemed to be reliable, to the effect that the Austrians were stationed on the Adige. It was not impossible, in itself, that the Austrians should have taken up a central position, from which they could throw their army either east or west, according to the quarter from which they were attacked ; at any rate, the report in question seems to have been accepted as earnest without much inquiry. Under the idea of its correctness it was resolved to modify the plan of the campaign ; the demonstration was to be turned into a substantive movement. On the Sunday morning, the army, which had crossed the Mincio near Goito, was divided into three forces. One corps was marched northwards to occupy the railroad between Verona and Peschiera ; the Third Corps proceeded southwards nearly at right angles to occupy the line from Verona to Mantua ; while the Second Corps guarded the passage of the river. The plan, I think, was well conceived enough, if the Italians had been right in believing that they would be unopposed by the Austrians. Had they been able to establish themselves firmly at Roverbella and Castel Nuovo, as they hoped, they would have severed all communication between Peschiera, Verona, and Mantua, and could have gained a most important advantage. Unluckily, "if" is a very dangerous element in war. We all know from our childhood the story of the little boy who said he was very near getting a cow, because he asked his grandfather for one, and, if the answer had been yes, he should have got it. In much the same way, the Italians were very near carrying the position defended by the Quadrilateral by a *coup de main*. If the Austrians had only not opposed

their advance, the fact would have been accomplished.

My own opinion is that the Italians, like a great many of the wisest people in the world, believed what they wanted to believe, and acted accordingly. The King was eager to celebrate the anniversary of Solferino by a purely Italian victory—by occupying the very positions which the French armies had declined attacking on the morning of their great battle ; the commander-in-chief was seduced by the prospect of winning a great success, which would eclipse the fame of any achievement that would be done by his younger rival, to whom the more critical part in the campaign had been entrusted by previous concert ; the army was absolutely confident of victory, and desired nothing so much as to have an opportunity of fighting the Austrians anyhow or anywhere.

So the army set forth from the Mincio to occupy the positions assigned to it on the Peschiera-Verona and Mantua-Verona lines with as much confidence, and apparently with as little caution, as if it had been ordered to march from one barrack to another. Since the defeat mutual recriminations have been exchanged—as always happens in such cases—between the different generals who were responsible for the execution of the movement. It is too early to apportion the blame attaching to the various officers implicated ; if it is true that the foremost division of the First Corps led the advance towards Castel Nuovo through a broken and intricate country, without taking the precaution to throw out skirmishing parties, the oversight is unpardonable ; but it is obvious that the whole advance was of the most imprudent character. No arrangements had been made for concentrating the army in case any portion of it met with a serious check. In fact, the contingency of the army encountering the Austrians in force on the positions which it was intended to occupy, had never been contemplated as possible. Yet this was what actually occurred. The details of the battle have been already given at length in the

papers. Confusing and contradictory as they are, the general outline of the engagement is clear enough. On the previous day the Austrians had concentrated their main force in and about Verona. Concealed behind a low range of hills to the west of the fortress, they waited till the Third Corps had approached near the line of railroad at Castel Nuovo, and then opened fire upon them with murderous effect. The Italians, caught in a trap, tried most gallantly to carry the Austrian batteries by repeated charges, but without success. Not only was the Austrian position immeasurably stronger than that of their enemy, but, owing to the unfortunate dispersion of the Italian army, they had an immense superiority in numbers. Their men, brought up by railroad from the fortresses, were fresh and unencumbered with luggage; while the Italians were worn out with a long march under a broiling sun. For many hours the Italians continued a hopeless contest in the hopes of reinforcements arriving. Unfortunately the First Corps was too far away to come up to their succour; while the Second, which might have possibly rendered some assistance, found it impossible to advance, owing to the roads being blocked up by the military train of the Third Corps, which had fallen into complete disorder. Probably, if the Austrians had known how completely the force which had attacked them was isolated from the main body of the army, they could have pursued it with some vigour, and turned a retreat into a rout; but when they perceived that the attack on the Verona-Peschiera line was effectually repulsed, they turned their force against the First Corps, which had advanced on the Verona-Mantua railroad with some success. The defeat of this, the right wing of the attacking army, was not nearly so decisive and so disastrous as that of the left wing. The Italians claim the engagement at Roverbella and Villa Franca as a drawn battle; but I think, surely, it must be called a defeat, as the Italians withdrew from their positions towards evening. By nightfall the defeated army had re-

turned to the positions they occupied in the morning, and on the following day they recrossed the frontier stream of the Mincio. The losses of the Italians were undoubtedly severe: they had one general and sixty-nine officers killed; they had nearly three thousand men wounded, and four thousand missing, and they had lost from twenty to five and twenty guns.

Still the battle was, in many respects, an encouraging one; the troops had fought splendidly, the regiments from the southern provinces showing as much gallantry as the old soldiers of the Sardinian army. The troops themselves were elated with the consciousness that, on very unequal terms, they had held their own against the famous Austrian soldiery. If the defeat of Custoza had been only one of a series of battles, it would have been a misfortune, and nothing more. Being the first, and, as seems likely while I write, the sole battle of the war, it is thought a national calamity.

The first result of the defeat was to enable the Austrians to detach very large reinforcements to the army opposed to Cialdini. Immediately, therefore, on receipt of this unexpected engagement, Cialdini withdrew his troops back across the Po. The whole concerted attack had to be abandoned, or rather adjourned, and a new plan had to be formed, while the public confidence in the directors of the army was much shaken. The difficulties of the position were aggravated by the unwise reluctance of the military authorities to confess the real truth. A futile attempt was made to conceal the fact that the Italian army had recrossed the Mincio. The publication of any official statement of the losses was unaccountably delayed, and the gravity of the check sustained was exaggerated by public rumour. The events which followed the defeat of Custoza,—the reaction it created, and the manner in which it affected the nation and the Government—belong properly to the second or diplomatic epoch of the war. Of that, if you can afford me space, I hope to write in the next number of your Magazine.

SILCOTE OF SILCOTES.

BY HENRY KINGSLEY, AUTHOR OF "RAVENSHOE," "THE HILLYARS AND THE BURTONS," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

MISS RAYLOCK COMES TO OUR ASSISTANCE.

OLD Miss Raylock (many have forgotten her name—writers get soon forgotten, unless they are very first-class) wrote three or four very charming, terse, and carefully thought-out stories, a long time ago, at a time when the demand for such tales was nearly as great as now, and when the supply was deficient. They were merely honest tales about social life in its ordinary aspects, but told with a charm and a grace which I could, if I dared, compare with Miss Austin or Mrs. Gaskell. It is to the credit of the time in which she wrote those stories (not far from 1820, rather a Gilbert Gurney, Tom and Jerry time, on the whole) to be able to say that they sold well, and that she came to live in our village, with nearly three thousand pounds added to her previously slender fortune. She is, therefore, not only nearly the oldest neighbour we have, but is also a very old lady. She is as well able to write now as ever she was. We have urged her to do so; but she steadily refuses. She replies always No, my dear, I had something to say forty years ago, and I said it, and, what is more, my dear, they listened to me. I have nothing particular to say now, and so I shall remain silent. My charming style? Certainly, mine *was* a charming style. But mere style don't warrant a man or woman in writing, if they have nothing to say. But I have something to say! Very likely, but I see George Eliot and Mrs. Gaskell saying all I have got to say, and a deal more, in a far better style than mine. I'll write no more, please. Talk? Oh, I'll talk to you as long as you like. An old woman is only left alive to talk:

she will do less mischief in that way than she would if she wrote after living out of the world as long as I have. Will I gossip? Certainly; there is nothing I am fonder of. You must agree to leave the room, however, if you hear me speaking ill of any one. Will I tell you about Squire Silcote? Certainly. I will tell you all the good I know of him. But if I get on the subject of the Princess Castelnuovo, stop me, or my petulant old tongue will make me say things about her which I shall be very sorry for afterwards. No, no! I don't encourage me to talk about that poor woman. I have nothing to forgive, but—but she irritates me. And that is so very wrong,—a woman who would give, and who has given, the gown off her back, and the shoes off her feet, for sheer kindly honest goodwill. I ought to be ashamed of myself. Now, dear, what do you want to know about Harry Silcote? Everything?

Well, the father of the present Squire Harry was a great country attorney, agent for several very great houses, as his father had been before him, and was, of course, a very wealthy man. The largest of his agencies, or what you call them, was, however, that of Sir George Denby's estate. You can anticipate me here. All the world knows about the four Miss Denbys. The estate was left to the eldest, who married Lord Ballyroundtower, who gambled away the whole sixty thousand a year, interest, principal, country houses, timber, everything but the bare land, in ten years, and left her a penniless woman, dependent on her three sisters. Silcote's father acted as an honest man from beginning to end of the dreadful business; used his influence with Sir George Denby to prevent the match, without avail; to have reasonable settle-

ments made, not to much purpose ; and, after his death, did all he could to stay her infatuation for one of the most worthless men who ever lived. The story is too well known to dwell on. He debauched away a million or more of her money, and at his death left his countess without a farthing. Old Silcote was not any the richer for the ruin. He loved Lady Ballyroundtower and her family, and he was probably the only honest man whom the Earl saw in the way of money matters during those wild ten years. I glance over this stale old story only to show that the present Squire's money was honestly come by, for folks are superstitious about here, and say that ill-gotten money won't wear. Fudge ! a lawyer's money is as honestly got as a novelist's, any day.

You and the world know the story I have been telling you quite well, but every one who calls Sir George Denby a fool does not know that he left three other daughters with thirty thousand pounds a piece. Quiet ladies, quite as plain in appearance, quite as gentle, as good, and as affectionate at that most ill-used and unfortunate lady, but a little more wise. Certain little brown ladies of doubtful age, three in number, used for some time to be found in the world behind doors, or going down to supper a step at a time, one behind the other, without any one with them ; encouraging one another with little quack-like notes, as of little ducks encouraging one another to take the water : or in the crushroom of the opera in a difficulty about their carriage, waiting, like three timid little quails, until that terrifying bellow of "Miss Denby's carriage," should shock the ear of night in the Haymarket, and then, trotting out like three frightened little sandpipers, to hide their heads from the dreadful crowd of eyes under the lights. I have not been in the world lately, but they tell me that a woman is safe from insult anywhere now. It was not always so then. There were young fellows in those days who would either have accosted those three ladies, or, if they were

not pretty enough, jeered at them. But, not to ramble, these three little brown ladies were the three Miss Denbys, following their sister, the countess, into society, and not liking it at all, but wishing they were back at Denby among the poor and the schools.

They got known. The Earl's name was Tom, and they got known in society as Tom's sisters-in-law. One day somewhere some one said that Tom's youngest sister-in-law had married a fellow in the country. It was perfectly true, as are not all things which are said in society. Being out of society as I am, and yet being so intimate with my dear neighbours, who are in society, I hear all the latest news from the world. But it seems to me always all wrong. It seems to me that the girls always come and contradict their own intelligence in less than a week. I beg your pardon. Yes. It was true that the youngest Miss Denby married a clergyman, and had a little girl. And, all their property being secured, this little girl was the heiress of ninety thousand pounds, and Harry Silcote married her, and there never would have been any trouble between them if it had not been for the princess : at least I always connected it with her.

That is how Harry almost doubled the already great fortune of his father. The arrangement was the most natural in the world. For many years his father had been almost the only friend of the sisters. Harry had been always in and out of the house as if he belonged to it, and had seen Laura the heiress grow up beside him. Just when he was twenty-four and she nineteen, he announced that he had fallen in love with her. There was no trouble about the match. Harry was clever, pushing, gentlemanly, and rich. He was no spendthrift, he was hard at work as a barrister, and with his introductions to the profession certain to succeed : certain to get to the top of the tree. They were married.

Even then I remember that there was a cloud upon his face, which has since deepened into the continual scowl we

see now. She was handsome, gentle, and good, just the sort of person you would expect from the quiet gentle bringing-up of her aunts. They lived to see her married, and then dropped off very quietly one after the other, leaving her alone in the world with Harry Silcote.

They were very happy together until they had a little boy, and his sister came to live with them. She is now the Princess Castelnuovo. One cannot help thinking that her folly had something to do with it. She is so very indiscreet. What is the meaning of the final catastrophe no one seems to know. It came in this manner. He was on the Western Circuit at Exeter, defending a young sailor who was charged with stabbing a Jew crimp. Silcote had been as brilliant and as gay as ever up to the time of the opening of his case, which was the last time any of his friends had speech of him. The case was interesting, and Silcote more splendid than he had ever been before.

He won his case, to every one's surprise. The terrified deer-eyed sailor lad, who had kept those eyes fixed on Silcote all the morning, gave a gasp of relief, at the astonishing effect of his counsel's eloquence. The judge, who had very properly summed up dead against the prisoner, looked at the jury as if admiration for that bulwark of our national liberties was not, at that moment, the prevailing sentiment in his mind. Silcote's friends crowded round him congratulating; but he scarcely spoke a word to any of them. He left Exeter that day, and was unheard-of in the world for four years.

At the end of that time his father died, and he re-emerged from somewhere and took possession of the property. His first wife had died above three years before in Italy, and he was married again. By his first wife he had a son, the Rev. Algernon Silcote of Lancaster Square; by his second, now also dead, Thomas, Arthur, and Evelyn.

CHAPTER VI.

ALGERNON.

SILCOTE had a child by his first wife, the niece, daughter, and sole object in life of the two feeble little brown Miss Denbys, and their married sister. That child was represented first of all by a baby, whose specialities were that he was rather paler than babies in general, and had large eager scared eyes; that he took notice sooner than most babies, but kept such deductions as he had made from ascertained facts entirely to himself, refusing to reduce them to practice until he had verified them further; and so, consequently, at three years of age, was the most left-handed, unlucky child to be found, one would guess, for miles round. Not at all a healthy child; a child who did really require a sensible doctor to see after him; who came, by the mother's side, from a family who believed in doctors, and got physicked and drugged accordingly: and the best child for taking medicine ever seen. Indeed, medicine in some form soon became a necessity to him, and, later in life, the principal part of his mild pecuniary embarrassments had their origin in this necessity.

When he was three years old his mother died, and he never saw his father after this. Gradually he developed into a pale, good child, easily kept quiet, easily made to cry; very thoughtful apparently, but keeping his thoughts strictly to himself. Then he became a pale, leggy boy, a great favourite at school, working very hard, but getting no prizes except those for good conduct, which were always given to him without question or hesitation. Then there was a lanky youth who stayed at school late, until he became grandfather of the sixth, in a tail coat and stand-up collars.

Then he grew into the gentlest and best of freshmen to a somewhat fast college, who, although slow, religious, and of poor health and peaceful habits, gained a sort of half respectful half pitying affection from the strongest and the wildest: more particularly after he had, mildly

but quite firmly, before a whole common room, refused to give any information whatever concerning the ringleaders at a bonfire, which had been made under his window, and which he confessed to have witnessed. The men waited outside hall and cheered him that evening. Those wild young spirits, who had only a week before prised open his oak with a coal hammer at midnight, nailed him into his bed-room, broken his tea-things, and generally conducted themselves as our English youth do when anything abnormal, and consequently objectionable, comes in their way, now made full amends by coming to him in a body, and telling him that it was they who had done it, but that they didn't know he was a brick ; beyond which what could any gentleman desire in the way of satisfaction ? He got on with them. Many will remember the way in which he, too gentle to denounce, would quietly and silently leave the company when the brilliancy of the conversation got a little too vivid for him, and men got fast and noisy. He was in the confidence of all in his second year. When the elder Bob got his year's rustication, it was up and down Algy Silcoote's room that he walked, with scared pale face, consulting him as to how the terrible news was to be broken to the governor. When Bob's little brother, the idle, gentle little favourite of the college, got plucked for his little-go, he bore up nobly before the other fellows, who wisely handed him over to Old Algy ; and on Algy's sofa the poor boy lay down the moment they were alone together, and wept without reserve or hesitation. So he took his modest pass degree, and leaving, to the sorrow of every one, from the master to the messenger, was ordained one Trinity Sunday, having a small London curacy for title.

During the three happy years he had spent in concluding his education, he had had but few visitors. He was the only quiet man in St. Paul's, and quiet and mild men of other colleges were nervous about coming to tea with him in that den of howling and dangerous lunatics. The lodge alone, with its

crowd of extravagantly-dressed men in battered caps and tattered gowns, who stared, and talked loudly and openly of illegal escapades, who rowed in the university eight,—ay, and got first-classes in the schools, too, some of them, the terrible fellows—was too much for these heroes. They used to pass, quickly and shuddering, that beautiful old gateway, until the shouting of the encaged spirits became mellowed by distance : wondering what could possibly have induced Silcoote's "friends" to send him to such a college. But they always greedily listened to Algy's account of the terrible affairs which were carried on in that dreadful place. And indeed Algy was not sorry to recount them ; for the conversation of the set to which his religious principles had driven him was often wearisomely dull, and sometimes very priggish and ill-conditioned. There were but four or five of them as earnest and good as himself, and the others palled on him so in time, with their prate of books they bought and never read, and of degrees they never took, that sometimes, in coming back late to that abode of mad fantastic vitality and good humour called St. Paul's College, he seemed to feel that he was going where he had never been—home ; and was about to get a welcome—mad enough, but sincere.

So Algy had no more than two out-college visitors all the time he was there, and they were wonderful favourites in the place. Algy's brothers were such great successes that the brightness which overspread his face on their arrival communicated itself to many others.

They were so utterly unlike him. The first, a splendid young cornet of dragoons, up to anything, bound to uphold the honour of the army by being so much faster than anybody else that it became necessary for the Vice-Chancellor to communicate with the colonel of his regiment, to the intense delight and admiration of the Paul's men, and the deep horror of poor Algy. But, in spite of Tom's naughtiness, Tom was dearer to his half-brother Algy than anything else in this world, and the boy dragoon, though he was fond of teasing and shock-

ing Algy, was as fond of him as he could be of anything.

The other brother and visitor was a very different person. A handsome, bright-eyed, eager youth from Eton, with an intense vivid curiosity and delight in everything, as if the world, which was just opening before him, was a great and beautiful intellectual problem, which unfolded and got more beautiful as each fresh piece of knowledge and each fresh piece of experience was gained : at one time in a state of breathless delight and admiration at hearing some man pass a splendid examination ; then rapt in almost tearful awe at the anthem at Magdalen ; then madly whooping on the tow-path. Such were some of the moods which expressed themselves in the noble open face of Arthur, during these precious visits to his brother. It its quieter moments, in the time of its most extreme repose, this face had the look of one thinking earnestly. If people began to talk, the lad sat perfectly still, but turned his keen brown eyes on each speaker in turn as he spoke, without any change of feature ; but, if anything touched or interested him in the conversation or argument, his eyebrows would go up, and his mouth lengthen into a smile. A boy too proud to applaud where he did not feel, but applauding eagerly enough where he did.

The good and gentle Algernon had never, to his recollection, seen his father, or been home. The little brown bird-like Miss Denbys, his grandaunts, had died very soon after he was born, or, no doubt, he would have been placed in their guardianship ; as it was, he was consigned to his paternal aunt's care, the lady who was then plain Miss Silcote, with her forty thousand pounds or so, but whom we have already seen as the Princess Castelnuovo. This was the lady who had brought him up ; for his father—although providing well, almost handsomely, for him until he got other provision—steadily refused to set eyes on him, although he allowed his half-brothers, by his second marriage, to be

friends with him. Algy never really had a home, until he got the one in which we shall see him directly. The place in which he spent his holidays and vacations, was, up to a certain time, his aunt Mary's house in Bryanstone Square. She was most devoted and most kind to him, as she was to every one ; though he even, before she went to Italy for two years and came back a princess, had time, with his very simple brains, to find out that she was very silly and frivolous at times, very fond of admiration, and sometimes, in her cowardice, as false as false could be, and sometimes, though very seldom, as vindictive as only a real coward can be.

He could remember his mother—just remember a gentle, kind face, not in the least like (his honesty compelled him to say) the ivory miniature in his possession. He could remember his aunt Mary, as she was at that time. He could remember very well a splendid officer of Horse Guards, red Sir Godfrey Mallory, who used to be much with his mother and his aunt ; but he could not quite decide if he had ever seen the father who had so steadily and so strangely refused to see him—the father whom he heard mentioned once or twice by young fellows at St. Paul's, who came from Berkshire, as the "Dark Squire." He could not remember whether he had ever seen him ; but he could call up a certain scene at any time by night or day. His aunt Mary, his mother, and Sir Godfrey Mallory, were together in the drawing-room, and he was playing on the carpet, when there came in a scowling, wild-looking man, who said something which passed over the ears of childhood unheeded, but which made terrible havoc among the others. All he could remember was that his aunt Mary scolded all parties till she fell into hysterics, that Sir Godfrey drew himself up, and scornfully exasperated the dark-looking intruder by withering words, until the latter struck the former, and, in an undignified and disgraceful struggle, threw him violently to the ground, but the servants and

grooms came in and separated them ; and that all this time his mother, having caught him up, held him close to her on the sofa, and, when it was all over, and they were gone, continued to tremble so, that he, poor little fool, thought she must be cold, and tried to cover her with some bauble of a rug which lay on the couch. He could remember all this ; it was all that his childish recollection could retain ; and he used to ask himself, "Was the dark-looking man who came in and beat Sir Godfrey my father ?" It was his father. Though Algy remembered his actually striking Sir Godfrey, he happily neither understood, nor could remember, the false coarse words with which the blow was accompanied.

There came a time very soon after, he tells us in his simple way, when they told him he could not go to his mother, for she was too ill to see him ; and very soon after a time when his aunt Mary (a kind woman, with all her great faults) came to him, and gently told him that he would not see his mother any more. "I took it from her lips like gospel," Algy says in his simple way. "I didn't know she was dead. I didn't know what death was at that time. She said I was never to see my mother any more, and it was the same as a bit of catechism or creed to me ; I always believe what is told me. I should believe anything you told me. And I believed her. I did not try to go to my mother, for I believed my aunt's statement implicitly. The reason I cried myself into a fever is, that I felt that dreadful sense of utter loneliness and desertion which a child can feel and live, but which drives a full-grown man to the lunatic asylum or to suicide. They took me to kiss her in her coffin, sir, and I complained to them about her dress. Allow me to call your attention to the fact that the most perfect ballad in the English language is built on the neglect and desolation of two children. As a sentimentalist yourself, sir, you are scarcely prepared to deny that a neglected and deserted child is a more pathetic object than an unlucky lover."

No. 82.—VOL. XIV.

His curacy was in a rapidly-increasing neighbourhood of the north of London. When he was first ordained the place was a wilderness of scaffold-poles and gravel-pits, with here and there a fragment of a field-hedge, or some country cottage, looking very small and very old among the new houses lying round in all directions ; not, however, that the new houses were of any vast size, for the neighbourhood was decidedly a middle-class one, composed of thirty or forty pound houses. Before he had been two years in the curacy, Lancaster Square, composed of just such houses, was finished, and the church at one end had been built also in all the native hideousness of the period. What with pew-rents, Easter-dues, and what not, the stipend of the church would reach at least, one way with another, 300*l.*—a large income for those parts, giving the incumbent that *prestige* which it is so necessary for a clergyman of the Establishment to have. There was no doubt who was to have it. The bishop inducted the Rev. Algernon Silcote, to the satisfaction of every one who knew him, from Monseigneur Gray to Mr. Hoxworth, the Baptist minister.

Very few clergymen, at all events, then, hesitated to marry upon 300*l.* a year, and to Algernon Silcote, with his modest habits, it seemed to be a very fine income. Mr. Betts, one of the wealthiest men in those parts, a stock-broker, had been the principal subscriber to the testimonial which he had received when he had quitted the curacy ; Miss Betts (his only daughter) and he had a mutual admiration for one another, and so they married, and he bade farewell to all hopes of comfort for the future.

She was a foolish woman, an only daughter, pretty, gentle, and utterly spoiled and ignorant. Whether it was his voice, his position, or his preaching, which made her fall in love with this gaunt young curate, it is impossible to say ; but she admired him, and gave him every opportunity of falling in love with her. He did so, and to his astonishment and delight, for the first time in his life, found that one woman

honoured him by a preference above all other men. Some of the young fellows of those parts, who were just getting on so far in life as to think of settling, expressed their discontent at a parson, with half their income, carrying off the best match thereabouts, not reflecting that Algernon discounted his position as a gentleman, and education, for a large sum. In a year's time, however, they congratulated one another on their escape.

She had certainly brought with her an allowance of 150*l.* a year, but she was so extravagant, so useless, and so silly, that it was worse than nothing. She was confined just as the sudden shock of her father's bankruptcy came on them. From this time to the day of her death the poor woman was only a fearfully-expensive incumbrance.

The bankrupt father was instantly and promptly received into Algy's house, by Algy himself, with a most affectionate welcome. If there was one man more than another to whom Algy was polite and deeply respectful, it was to this suddenly broken man, whom he had made, by his own act, an ever-present burden to himself. Mr. Betts was vulgar, loud, ostentatious, selfish, and not too honest, but he was in distress, and Algy, simple fellow, knew only of one Gospel.

Algy's health had never been good, and now his wife worried him into a state of permanent dyspepsia, or whatever they call that utter lowering of the system which arises from worry and anxiety, as well as from laziness and over-feeding. She worried herself to death after her fourth confinement, and left him slightly in debt, with a household from which anything like comfort and management had been banished five years before.

But it was home to them. They contrived to keep their muddle and untidiness to themselves. Algy was always well-dressed on Sunday, and, since his misfortunes had begun, his sermons had acquired a plaintive and earnest beauty which they might have lacked before. The more weary life grew to him, the more earnest — sometimes the more

fiercely eager — he got, on one point — the boundless goodness and mercy of God. He gained power with his people. The very extreme party, both in and beyond the Established Church, allowed him great unction. His church was full, but there were but a limited number of sittings, and his four children were growing, and must be educated. So it came about that home became home to him no longer — that it became necessary for him to give up his last and only luxury, privacy. It became necessary for him to take pupils.

It was his father-in-law Betts who pointed out to him this method of increasing his income. Betts was a bad specimen of the inferior kind of the London City speculator. He had all his ostentation, his arrogance, his coarseness, his refusal to recognise high motives (in which latter characteristic your peasant and your town mechanic are so often far superior to the man who leads him), while he was without his *bontomie*, and his ready-handed careless generosity. Neither ostentation nor real careless goodwill could ever make him subscribe liberally; the only large subscription he ever gave was that to Algy's, to his prospective son-in-law's, testimonial; not a very nice man, by any means — a man who seemed to Algy with his Oxfordism entirely made up of faults with no virtues, a man who grated on his dearest prejudices a hundred times a day, a man sent him for his sins. The horror of his being a bankrupt, the horror of anything connected with dear noisy old St. Paul's having gone into the Bankruptcy Court, was enough to make him renounce all communion with his old friends, and keep himself with lofty humility from the world; but after this, the man himself remained on his hands, a deadly thorn in his side, annoying him all day long by his manners, his way of eating even, his everlasting allusion to his losses, and, more than all, by his clumsy expressions of gratitude, "the more offensive," said Algy, who had not then been quite cured of priggishness, "because they are sincere."

Betts's very numerous faults were more those of education and training than of nature; for if one cannot believe that some natures are more difficult to spoil than others, and that the *whole* business is a mere result of the circumstance of a man's bringing up, one would be getting near to believe nothing at all. The man's nature was not a bit changed because Algy in his treatment of him scrupulously followed the directions given in the Sermon on the Mount. His nature remained the same, but all his old landmarks of riches and respectability had been swept away by his bankruptcy, and immediately after he saw, with his eyes cleared from all cobwebs, while in a state of humiliation, a man who acted on a law he had never recognised, hardly ever heard of: the pure law of Christianity. Not that he ever fully recognised the fact: perhaps he was too old. To the very last, while alluding to Algy, he would say, "Sir, my son-in-law is the most perfect gentleman I ever saw, and a sincere Christian, sir. Yes, sir, a most sincere Christian, I give you my honour."

When Algy, for the first time in his life, found that he was actually pushed for money; when he found that the weekly bills were increasing, without the means of paying them; that, although Reginald might be kept from school a little longer, yet his darling eldest born, Dora, was growing vulgar, and imitating in her talk the maids, with whom she spent four-fifths of the day, instead of him, with whom she spent about one-fifth; then he thought it time, to consult his father-in-law, whose knowledge of the world, he put it to him, might be most valuable.

"You see," said Algy, "that I am a mere child; I really am. Such small intellectual vigour as I possess" (he used this style of talk to Betts: he would have spoken very differently to a university man) "is used up by my sermons. I ask you—you will smile at my simplicity—what does a man in my position do to increase his income?"

"Are you quite sure," said Mr. Betts, somewhat huskily, "that you

would do better by increasing your income?"

"It is absolutely necessary, I fear, my dear sir," said Algy. "I must have a good governess for Dora. Our confidence is mutual, I believe, and I cannot conceal from you the fact that, unless Dora has some lady to superintend her education—well, I will cut it short—in fact she will not grow up a lady herself."

"Who the deuce wants her to be a lady! She won't have any money."

"My dear sir —"

"I brought up my girl for a lady, and she was no good, at least to you. I don't believe in girls, without one tithe of the prospects she had when you married her, being brought up as ladies. Governessing ain't any good, I tell you—they never make one and a half per cent. on the money spent on their education; and the flower-making ain't much good now. They say the women are going to take to the law writing, but a friend of mine in the business says they'll never come it. Try that. But, Lord! see the various games I have tried to make a little money, and ease you. And see my success. I am a burden on you still."

"You are no burden, my dear friend. Even if you ever had been, you could repay the whole of your obligation by pointing out to me the way to increase my income. I *must* have my children educated as gentlemen and ladies, and Reggy *must* go to school."

"Must he? I never went to school, but here I am, says you. Well, I won't dispute; but, knowing what I do know, I'd apprentice him to a smith. Look here: your education cost two thousand pounds, first and last, and I don't deny that the investment was a good one. Three hundred a year for two thousand is a good investment. But then your friends had the money, and you turned out well, and you had luck in getting this church; whereas, in the case of Reggy, you ain't got the money, and he may turn out bad (which is deuced likely), and you nor no other man can

be answerable for his luck. Therefore, I say, apprentice him to the smith's trade."

"I could not dream of such a thing."

"Of course you couldn't. You're a gentleman, and I'll speak up for gentlemen—as long as I live. But gentlemen—I mean such as you—never do any good for themselves : you know swells, don't you ?"

"Do you mean noblemen ?"

"Of course I do."

"Yes, I know a few noblemen; I think I know a good many noblemen. At Paul's we were very intimate with Christchurch, and I was popular in both places ; but what then ?"

"Why, this : why do you send these swells away when they seek you ? Why, the day before yesterday, while I was at the parlour window, and you in your study, up comes the Marquis of Bangor, hunting you out as if you were a fox. And you gave him 'Not at home ;' and I heard him say, 'Dash it all, I should like to find him again,' or something of that sort. And I went to the stationer's, and hunted him up in the Peerage. Patron of nine livings. And I got the Clergy List, and I found two of the incumbents instituted before Waterloo ; and then you come to ask me how to increase your income. Three words of common civility to Lord Bangor would make you a rich man."

"Yes, but," said Algy, "you see I couldn't say them—more particularly now you have told me that two of his livings are likely to drop in. Don't you see ?"

Betts couldn't see that at all.

"I'll try to explain. I used to know Lord Bangor as an equal. It became my painful duty on one occasion to rebuke Lord Bangor, openly and publicly, for speaking in a way which—which I did not approve of. I never did so to any other man, for my custom was to leave the room when talk began to get fast and wild. That he has respected me ever since is nothing. Is this the man to whom you would have me go and trundle for a living ?"

"I can't understand this sort of

thing," said Betts. "But you are familiar with other noblemen."

"I am not familiar with any. I cannot bring them here ; I cannot."

"Well, you know best," said Betts. "I thought swells were swells, and were to be used accordingly. Otherwise, what is the good of them ? If you are going in this line, *you* must take pupils. There is the Rev. George Thirlwall takes three, at two hundred a year a piece. There's six hundred for you, barring their keep."

"Yes ; but then Thirlwall was a Balliol scholar, and got a double first. He can command such a price. I doubt, as a mere pass man, whether I should get any pupils at all."

"But his education did not cost any more than yours."

"Rather less, I should think. He got his scholarship and his fellowship. I never got anything better than a good conduct prize. I have not the brains."

"That's a rum thing," pondered Betts aloud. "He ain't half such a good fellow as you, and a stick in the pulpit. Hang education, I say. I don't see my way to the interest on my money. And I've been a bold man, too—to bold, as your pocket can tell for this many a year, sir. It was the Illinois Central finished me at last, but the Illinois Central seems to me safe alongside of a university education. However, if you are bent against the law writing and blacksmithing, and against the using of swell friends, so strong, you must try for pupils. Unless—"

"Unless ; what ?"

"Unless you would try your father, sir."

"I tried him long ago," said Algy.

"And it didn't do ?"

"Oh, dear no ; not in the least. Far from it."

CHAPTER VII.

PAR NOBILE FRATRUM.

ALGERNON's modest allowance of 250/- a year had been continued through the usual channel, all through the time of his curacy, but, when he entered on the

duties of his incumbency, he was informed by his father's lawyer that it would be discontinued. He submitted, with a sigh, without remonstrance or remark, and gave up all hope of assistance from that quarter. It was not that he proudly made any resolution against accepting it; it merely seemed to him utterly improbable that such help would ever be offered, and utterly impossible that he should ever ask for it.

But many apparent impossibilities have been done for the sake of children. When he began to see that he was poor, and was getting poorer, the thought of their future was quite enough to set aside any lingering feelings of pride or fear, had any such been there. He put his case through his lawyer, and was refused. Old Silcote wished it to be understood that he could hold no further communication with Mr. Algernon Silcote.

Once, not long after this, the children fell ill of measles, or some childish disorder, and a sad time the poor widower had with them, and was still thanking God that they were on the mend, and that he had lost none of his precious little incumbrances, when a message came from Silcotes, ordering the children to be sent there for change of air, until they recovered their health. The message came through Silcote's lawyer, and was given in as ill-conditioned a manner as need be, but Algry had no "proper spirit" whatever. He thankfully sent the children off, and they were kept there for above two months. He was very thankful. "The ban then is not to descend to the next generation," he said. He thanked God for it.

The younger of his two visitors at Oxford, the bright-eyed young Arthur, now grown to be the man we saw him at Silcotes the night of the poaching affray, paid him frequent visits as of yore. It was he who brought the children back from Silcotes, with new clothes, new toys, new roses in their cheeks, and, alas, new wants and a new discontent at the squalid and untidy

home to which they had returned. Arthur, who noticed everything, noticed Miss Dora turning up her nose at several things, and heard one or two petulant remarks from her in strong disparagement of the *menage* at No. 20, Lancaster Square; and he said with his usual decision, "I shall stay a few days with you, Algry. Dora, you are tired with your journey, and consequently cross and disagreeable. Go to bed. No, leave your doll here. I want it."

Dora obeyed, reddening. "I'll stay a day or two, my Algry, and whip these children in. They have been most awfully spoilt by that very foolish aunt of ours. You will require the aid of my influence for a short time, until hers has become a thing of the past. What a noble child that Dora is! Every element of good about her. She has a will, and requires to have it controlled by a stronger one. But she is a sweet child."

"My Dora," said Algry, with perfect good faith, "reminds me, in all her ways, of her dear mother."

Arthur was just going to rap out in his short way, "Lord forbid." But he neither did that, nor what he felt inclined to do a moment afterwards—burst out laughing: he was getting that tongue of his under command by now.

"Well, she is a very sweet child, and Reggy is another. Reggy is an artist. Reggy will do great things in art. Reggy will be a Royal Academician, if those old dunderheads can ever be got to overcome their inveterate jealousy against anything approaching to talent and originality."

Algry answered in commonplaces, not quite knowing what words he was uttering, for he was confusedly wondering how an undergraduate could have such wonderful intuition about an art of which he was entirely ignorant, as to see a future Royal Academician in a child of nine, whose efforts hitherto had been certainly below the average. But it was only Arthur, he thought again with a smile,—Arthur the omniscient.

Arthur went on. "I love and admire everything you do, but I never admired

you more than when you gave up your pride and allowed these children to pay this visit."

"I have no pride, Archy," said Algernon. "And, if I had, I could not display it in that quarter."

Arthur turned his frank and noble face upon him, and looked at him keenly, and, as curtly as Rabelais's monk, asked,

"Why?"

"I cannot tell you."

"Do you mean on general grounds—on the ground that you have no right to be proud to your own father—or that you have no right to stand in your children's light? Or are there other grounds for your not being proud?"

"Ain't you getting—getting—come, a little too sharp, I won't say coarse, in your questions, my dear boy?" said Algy, with the most perfect sweet temper.

"I beg a thousand pardons, old boy. You are quite right. Do forgive me, and don't answer me. I thought I had cured myself of that miserable trick of cross-examining witnesses, and putting everybody in a logical hole. Let us change the subject."

"Not at all," said Algy. "I am going to answer you. The reasons on which I acted in sending my children to their grandfather at Silcotes were just such as you have suggested: that I had no right to be proud to my own father, and that I should be wicked to stand in my children's light. You asked me then if there were other reasons why I should show no pride in that quarter. I answer that there are. We must understand one another, at least partially, my dearest Arthur, even if that partial understanding aids in our separation. I know that it is to your good offices that I owe this recognition of my children. Utter the question which I see hanging on your lips."

"I'll utter it, Algy, though all the powers of the Inferno shall never make me believe in you as anything but the best man who ever walked. Here it is. Did you, before Tom or I remember, ever—well—make a fiasco?"

"Never! To you I will say the simple truth. Though I'm not strong in brain, and have that want of energy which comes from habitual ill-health, yet I have lived as blameless a life as any of us poor sinners can hope to lead."

"Then what has caused this terrible injustice of my father towards you?"

"He has not been unjust. He has been most generous. Question on, and let us have it out."

"Has his extraordinary treatment of you arisen from any facts in connexion with your mother?"

"Yes. I will now finish this conversation, and we will never resume it. I was put in possession of certain facts when I was seventeen. Now ask yourself, but never ask me, what has made me grey at six-and-thirty, and has produced that never-ending thought about self, and distrust of others, which has made him very little better than a lunatic."

"There is more than that in the governor's malady, you know," said young Oxford the omniscient, with good-humoured flippancy. "You haven't got to the bottom of that. That was all very well, what you said just now about the 'never-ending self-contemplation' of the governor; but, unfortunately, it don't exist. I don't rank the intellectual capacity of either you or the governor very high, and there have evidently been lies told by some one, probably by Aunt Mary. I'll put it all right. I'll go bail *your* mother was a good woman. The governor has got that curious eccentricity of brain which is generally acquired by a connexion with the aristocracy; they develop it by marrying their relations, and in some cases doing absolutely nothing for nearly ninety years. It must be evident, even to a third-class intellect, that the pair of you are slightly cracked. Come, *solvuntur risu*. Eh?"

"Not yet," said Algy. "If you knew everything you would wonder why I ever accepted anything at all from him. I should reply to this, that I am not a hero, and that I have only had enough to prevent my being a disgrace to him."

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS LEE.

On this occasion Arthur pointed out to Dora what he was pleased to call the extreme meanness of her conduct towards her father, in making disparaging comparisons between his house and her grandfather's. Dora received her scolding with perfect composure and silence, replying not one word, but looking steadily at him with her hands behind her back. Though she did not confess her fault, yet she never repeated it. Their visits to Silcotes took place every year after this. The old man ordered it, and every one obeyed; but Dora, honest little story-teller as she was, always, on her return home, used audibly to thank heaven that she was back in her own place once more, and to vilipend and ridicule the whole *menage* of Silcotes most entirely. The other children used generally to roar all through the night after their return, and to be unmanageable for the next week.

Two pupils were got—dough-faced foolish youths, who had made so little use of their schooling that their matriculation examination was considered more than doubtful, and so they were, with the wisdom of some parents, taken from experienced hands at school, and sent into the inexperienced hands of Algy. That he did his duty by them, and got them through, I need not say; but it was on the strength of these pupils that he engaged a governess.

Miss Lee was a foolish Devonshire young person, whose father had been a clergyman, and, as she always averred, kept hounds. It was quite possible, for he left her entirely destitute, and with no education, and so it became necessary for her to go out as a governess. She was not in the least fit for it, and Algy, of course, could only offer the most modest stipend. So they naturally came together from the extreme ends of England. Miss Lee, in addition to the disqualifications of ignorance and not very refined manners,

had another disqualification, considered in some families, and for good reason, to be greater than either of the others. She, like the majority of Devonshire girls, was amazingly beautiful.

Such, in the main, and given as shortly as possible, so as to avoid being duller than was necessary, is the information I had gained from Miss Raylock, Arthur, Algy, and others, about the Silcote family, as they were at the time of the children's third visit—the time of the poaching raid described in the first chapter. This coincided with the fourth time that Captain Tom Silcote had got leave of absence from duty, for the purpose of coming home, and representing one-half of his debts as the whole, and, with a sort of recollection of his Catechism, promising to lead a new life, and be in charity with all men. The debts which he confessed to his father were always paid—for was not he the heir? and he always went back to lead the old life over again, and to hate his unsatisfied creditors with all the hatred of a gentleman living habitually beyond his means.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SQUIRE INVADES MRS. SUGDEN'S TERRITORY AND GETS BEATEN.

BOISSEY is a great sheet of rolling woodland four or five miles square, which in two points, close together, heaves itself up so high as to be a landmark for several counties. The greater, and all the highest part of it, is unbroken beech forest; but, as you come lower, it begins to get broken open by wild green lanes, tangled fantastically at their sides by bramble, sweet briar, wild rose, and honeysuckles, by which a few solitary cottages stand here and there; picturesque cottages generally, standing alone, and not stinted for garden ground. As you get lower the fields become more frequent and larger, and you are among farms, generally embosomed in dense clusters of dark and noble elms; below this steep fields stoop suddenly

down to the level of the broad river meadows, and around three-fifths of the circle winds the Thames—by day a broad river of silver; in some evenings, when the sun has just sunk behind the dark dim wolds of Oxfordshire, a chain of crimson pools.

Dim mysterious wolds are those of Oxfordshire across the river; rolling, hedgeless, cultivated chalk down, capped always by the dark level bars of woodland: a land of straight though somewhat lofty lines, with no artistic incident for miles, in strong contrast to the fantastic prettiness of the elm hedgerows of the neighbouring Berkshire. A very melancholy piece of country, almost as melancholy as some of the warren lands in Norfolk, or one suspects of Lincolnshire, else why did a Lincolnshire man write—

“When from the dry dark wold the summer
airs blow cool
On the oat grass and the sword grass, and
the bulrush in the pool !”

—two of the most beautiful and melancholy lines in our language, more than worthy of Wordsworth. A lonely, dim looking county that Oxfordshire, as that dreaming little shepherd lad, James Sugden, saw it month after month, year after year, in his solitary watch over the sheep among the highest fields of the beautiful Borsey, or from the door of his father's cottage, highest up among the towering beech wood, when merry haymaking and merrier harvest were over, and the September sun was blazing down due west.

The boy had got rather a fine education—I will tell you how presently, though, if you are a really kind reader, a reader for whom one loves to write, you will have guessed the mere fact before. Educate a boy loosely, and set him to tend sheep, and, if he don't develop his imaginative powers, you may be pretty sure he has not got any, and had best, as a last chance, be sent to Cambridge, or elsewhere, to see what he can make of the mathematics. This boy was imaginative enough for a poet; only he wanted wits and application, without which no poet nor any one else can pos-

sibly do anything, and he used to dream about these Oxfordshire wolds. To his left, as he sat at his father's door, was a view much more interesting than the one towards Oxfordshire: Reading, six miles off, lay almost at his feet, and, above the towers and the smoke, on a clear day, rose a dim blue mountain, crowned with dark trees: Siddon, his mother told him, at whose bases lived Lord P—— and Lord C——, greater lords than Lord A——, almost as great as the ultimate lord of the great hanging woods of Clevedon. All this was very fine, but he always preferred the desolate wolds to the west, more particularly after his father had told him one evening, in confidence, when they were eating their poor supper together in the garden, under the falling dew and the gathering night, that just beyond those darkening wolds lay the most beautiful city in the whole world.

“How far off ?” asked the boy.

“Fifteen mile, across through Ipsden. A matter of eight and twenty by Benson and Dorchester.”

“It isn't Seville, is it ? Of course it is not. But Seville is the finest town in the world.”

“Oxford beats it hollow, I tell you.”

“Have you seen them both ?”

“Yes. Leastways, I know one on 'em well, and that's quite enough to give me a right to speak. If you want to know both sides of a question before you speaks about it, everlasting dumbness will be your portion. Whatever you've got to say, old fellow, rap it out, hard and heavy, and see what the other fellow has got to say. If he has the best of it, give in; if he hasn't, shut him up. But don't believe that you are in the right, for all that; only believe that he is a greater fool than you. So you see, old fellow, I say again that Oxford is a finer town than the one you named. We'd best get to bed, old chap, hadn't we ?”

Looking from the door of his father's cottage, he could see the top of the chimneys of Silcotes below him among the trees. A fine old place Silcotes, say 1650, a foursquare place of endless

gables of brick—the great addition made by the present squire's father (who may almost be said to have built it over again) being in perfect harmony with the old seventeenth century nucleus which he found. These additions had been made so long, that the newer bricks, with the assistance of cunning washes, had toned down to the colour of the older building, so that it required an architect's eye to tell new from old. A most harmonious house—for, in fact, the elder Silcote's architect, with a taste rare in those later years of "the worthless and bankrupt century, which ended by committing suicide," had carefully and painfully fulfilled the original design of the seventeenth century architect, whose work had probably been stopped by the Revolution, and who may, before he patched up and finished, have heard the cannonading from old Basing House, booming up from the S.W. from behind Bearwood.

It was a very beautiful place, and very beautifully kept up. If you went into the stables you would see the master's eye, or his stud-groom's eye, in the very straw plait which edged the litter; a Dunstable bonnet was only a slight improvement on it. If you went to the other end of the *menage*, if you went to look round the flower-garden, you would see the managing eye there also; terrace after terrace of the newest and finest flowers—lobelias, calceolarias, geraniums, and what not—piling themselves up in hideous incongruous patterns, until, in their sheer confusion, they became almost artistic; and then, above all, the great terrace of roses, which flushed up with nearly a year-long beauty, and then, clinging to the house itself, hung the deep dark porch, the only solecism in the house, with festoons of Jaune D'Espray, and Dundee Rambler, and, ever climbing, hung magnificent trophies of Blarri No. 2, and Gloire de Dijon, at every coign of vantage in the long façade.

"Eight thousand a year in house-keeping, and no company worthy of being so called ever seen." That was what the Princess of Castelnovo used

to tell Miss Raylock, and the princess should have known, for she was house-keeper. About the "company" she was undoubtedly right; with regard to the eight thousand a year, why you must generally divide that lady's statements by two, and then be very careful to examine closely the facts on which was based the remaining half of her assertion. There is, however, no doubt that this fine house of Silcotes, even in these dark times, was kept up with amazing liberality; and the very servants who left it of their own accord would tell you, almost pathetically, that they had never had anything to complain of, and that there was not such a servants' hall as Silcote's for miles round.

For, in spite of the liberality of Silcote's house-keeping, servants would not stay with him. There was no society and no change,—things which servants desire more even than good living. If you think that the footman in plush breeches, or the groom in white, is a mere machine, you are mistaken. If you think that the mere paying of these men's wages, and feeding them well, will secure these men, you are again mistaken. My lord or the squire cannot destroy these men's individuality, when they dress them in the clothes of the eighteenth century. Necessity may keep them quiet; good living and gaiety may keep them contented; but, if they get bored, they will "better" themselves as sure as possible, even at lower wages, and worse beer.

However, Silcote's servants never stayed. Their formula was, "that a man was not sent into the world to die of the blues," and I am sorry to say that in self-justification they set abroad, through the county, an account of the Dark Squire's eccentricities a great deal darker than the mere truth.

The ultimate fate of little James Sugden, on the night of the poaching affray, was this. The Princess had him plastered and mended as far as was possible, and then, having done her "possible," handed him over to the butler, who proceeded towards the men's quarters to see if he could get him a bed.

Those who were asleep were immovable, and those who were awake objected so very strongly, and in such extremely pointed language, that he did not dare to push his point ; at last, getting tired of argument, he used his authority where he dared, and quartered him on the youngest stable-boy. At sunrise James was on the alert, dressed, and ready to make his escape home.

Which was the way, and where were the dogs ? His companion told him the way, but could give no information about the dogs. They might be still loose : he would not venture beyond the stable yard for ten pounds till he knew they were kennelled. But the intense wish the boy had to be at home again overcame his fears, and he resolved to go. He had all the dislike which a dog or a child has, at first, to strange faces and places, and he dreaded seeing any folks in authority for fear they should bid him stay, in which case he knew he must obey. He fled. One terrible fright he had ; he opened a door in the wall, and, when he had shut it behind him, he found himself alone among the bloodhounds. His terror was simply unutterable at this moment ; but the dogs knew him, and proposed to come with him, and he, afraid to drive them back, was escorted by them as far as a gate, beyond which they would not come. Once out of sight of them, he sped away through the forest shard towards his home.

It was late in the day when he was sitting between his father and mother, looking out over the little garden of potatoes and cabbage, of filbert and apple trees, towards the westering sun over the Oxfordshire wolds. Their poor flowers were mostly fading by now, and the garden looked dull ; for cottagers' flowers are mostly spring flowers. In the lengthening evenings of early spring, the sight of nature renewing herself has its effect on the poorest of the hinds, to a certain extent, and in their dull way they make efforts at ornamentation, perhaps because they have some dim hope that the coming year cannot be quite so hopeless as the

one gone past — will not be merely another milestone towards chronic rheumatism and the workhouse. They must have such hopes, poor folks, or they would madden. These hopes come to them in the spring, with reviving nature, and then they garden. The wearied hind stays late out in the cool brisk April night, and spares a little time, after he has done delving in his potatoes, to trimming and planting a few poor flowers. But after, when nature gets productive and exacting, she absorbs him, and the flowers are neglected ; only a few noble perennials, all honour to their brave hearty roots,—your lilies and your hollyhocks, and latterly, I am pleased to see everywhere, your *Delphinium formosum*—standing bravely up amidst the forced neglect. So Sugden's garden, this bright September afternoon, was not sufficiently gaudy to keep James's eye from wandering across the little green orchard beyond the well, on to the distant hills.

Suddenly his father, badly hurt and still in pain, grew animated. "By Job," he said, "there's the deer ! There she goes. Hi ! look at her ! There she goes into the Four Acre, making for Pitcher's Spinney. She'll go to soil at Wargrave for a hundred pounds. They are hunting early this year. Stars and garters ! if here she don't come heading back ! It's old Alma¹ as sure as you are born, and she knows the ground."

They were all out in the garden, looking eagerly where Sugden pointed, expecting every moment to see Mr. Davis, and King, and a noble cavalcade, come streaming out of the forest-side. They were disappointed ; it was not one of Her Majesty's deer which Sugden had seen, but a great dog, nearly as large and nearly of the same colour, which now came cantering towards them. They had stared after him so

¹ Mr. Sugden's chronology is more than queer. He must have projected his soul largely into the future to name one of the finest deer which ever ran some years before that deer was calved.

long, and, after they had found out what he was, had stood looking at him so long, that some one else had time to come behind them, and, while they were slowly realizing that it was only one of the bloodhounds from the hall, a harsh voice from behind them said—

"He won't eat you. If he did he would not get very fat off you."

They turned, and found themselves face to face with the Dark Squire.

All three were too much surprised to speak, and so they stood a moment or so, and looked at Silcote. A compact, intensely firm-looking and broad-shouldered figure, with a grizzly head, square features, and a continual frown. Dress: grey coat, grey breeches, grey gaiters, square and inexorable boots. The late Mr. Cobbett would have admired the look of him very much until they got to loggerheads, which would not have been long.

He had to begin the conversation again. "You stand frightened at the first sight of me, you sheep. I was saying that, if my dogs ate a dozen such as you, they would not get fat. You peasantry are getting too lean even to eat, with your ten shillings a week, and your five shillings off for rent, firing, clothes' club, and the rest of it. You are sheep, mere sheep. Why don't you make a Jacquerie of it? You hate me, and I hate you. Why don't you cut my throat, burn my house down—unless you want it for your own purposes—and subdivide my lands? Bah! you have no courage for a Saxon population. Cannot you produce a Marat?"

It was Mrs. Sugden who answered. "You seem in one of your dark moods, Squire—that is to say, talking more nonsense than usual. You say you hate us, *cela va sans dire*; you say we hate you—that is completely untrue of us, as a class,—the more particularly about you, who are, with all your foolishness, the justest landlord about these parts. As I used to say to my darling Duchess of Cheshire, 'Don't patronize those people in the way you do. Love them and trust them, and they will in some sort

love and trust you. Don't be always teasing them in their own houses, and worrying them to death with impertinent inquiries about their domestic matters. They will only lie to you and hate you. Come to them sometimes as *Deus ex machina*, and relieve them from some temporary difficulty. You can always do that, for they are always in difficulties. You can buy them up at a pound a head like that, whereas, if you hunt and worry them, ten pounds won't make them grateful.' Now, my dear squire, what is the object of *your* visit?"

Never, probably, was a man so utterly aghast as Silcote. Here was a common labourer's wife, dressed in the commonest print, a woman he had never seen or never noticed before, blowing him up in French and Latin, and audaciously pricking him in the most delicate and most cherished parts of his long-loved folly, and saying things to him which his own petted Arthur dare not say. He looked, speechless, and saw only a common labourer's wife, in a common print gown, who laughed at him while he looked.

But she was very beautiful. Silcote had seen peasant women as beautiful, in the same style, in the Pay de Caux, but never in England. Silcote had never seen the very light brown hair, and the perfectly sharply cut features of the Norman among the English peasantry before; and, indeed, one seldom does, unless there is a story which some old postmaster, or old pensioned coachman, will tell you over the pipes and grog, after the cricket club dinner. Silcote stood amazed. He had his suspicions at once—the man lived on suspicion; but he was a gentleman, in speech at all events.

"I beg your pardon, I was not aware there was a lady here. I beg your pardon."

"There is no lady here; no semblance of one. I am merely an honest and respectable, perfectly honest and respectable, peasant woman. You may see me working in the fields any day, 'stooping and straddling in the clogging fal-

lows.' Let me observe that you have shut yourself up from the world too much, or you would never have accused me of being a lady. Ladies, as far as I can judge from my limited experience of them, don't speak to gentlemen as I spoke to you just now."

" May I ask you a question, ma'am ? " said Silcote, still lost in wonder.

" A dozen, if you choose."

" And get a dozen refusals of answer. Well and good, but will you answer this one out of the imaginary dozen ? I will only ask you one, and I ask it. *Who the deuce are you ?*"

" Exactly what I have said before. A peasant's daughter, who worked in the fields, who became dairymaid when her father became cowman ; who, in consequence of her great beauty, I believe " (here she drew herself up, and proudly, but frankly and honestly, looked at Silcote with the great brown eyes of her) " became lady's maid to Lady Caroline Poyntz, now Duchess of Cheshire. Those Poyntz girls would have everything handsome about them. Then there came a paradise of folly : no, not folly ; true love and good intentions are not folly. And then I turned peasant again, and then I went back to my old work, and you passed me the other day, scowling like your old self, while I was setting beans. Now, what did you please to want here, Silcote ? "

The Squire finding, after a good many years, some one who was not a bit afraid of him, answered civilly and to the purpose.

" The fact is, that this boy of yours behaved very pluckily last night. I want to better him. I will take him into the stable as a helper, and he will rise. It is a provision for him. These Cockney servants I get from Reading never stay. Tom, who will be my heir, has taken a fancy to him ; in fact, brought him home last night. He will be stud-groom, and will be provided for life. Will you let him come ? "

" No. Let him stick to his sheep. I, you see, know more about domestic service than most, and my answer is

' No.' Let him freeze and bake on the hillside with his sheep. Let him stay up late with his team, and then get out of his warm bed in the biting winter weather to feed them again at four. Let him do hedge-and-ditch work on food which a Carolina negro would refuse ; let him plough the heaviest clay until the public house becomes a heaven and a rest to him ; let him mow, until the other mowers find him so weak that he must mow with them no longer, lest he ruin the contract ; let him reap, until his loud-tongued wife can beat him at *that*—for he must marry, oh Lord, for he must marry, and in his own station too ; let him go on at the plough tail ; among the frozen turnips, among the plashy hedgesides, until the inevitable rheumatism catches him in the back, and the parish employs him on the roads to save the rates ; and then, when his wife dies, let them send him to the house, and let him rot there and be buried in a box : but he shall not be a domestic servant for all that, Silcote. I know too much about that. We have vices enough of our own, without requiring yours."

Silcote had nothing more to say—to her, at least. What he had to say he said to himself as he went home.

" That is a devil of a woman. She is all wrong, but she puts it so well. I never saw such a deuce of a woman in my life."

So two violent ill-regulated souls struck themselves together in consequence of this poaching raid, to the great benefit of both. The continual opposition of plain Reason to rampant Folly, is, I suspect, only suspect, of very little use. One knows so little. Dickens, watching narrowly and keenly, but making no deductions whatever, tells us, in effect, that the American mad doctors allow a patient's folly to develop to such an extent that it becomes folly to themselves. How would it be to allow another patient's folly to become so foolish as to make the saner patient ashamed of his crotchets ?

To be continued.

THYR

GOAT

THY

GOAT

THEOCRITUS.—IDYLL I.

THYRSIS AND A GOATHERD.

TRANSLATED BY C. S. CALVERLEY.

THYRSIS. SWEET are the whispers of yon pine, that makes
Low music o'er the spring : and, Goatherd, sweet
Thy piping. Second thou to Pan alone.

Is his the horned ram ? Then thine the goat.
Is his the goat ? Then unto thee shall fall
The kid : and fair the flesh of unmilked kids.

GOATHERD. Shepherd, thy lay is sweeter than the noise
Of streams that pour from yon heights hitherward.
If for their need the Muses claim the ewe,
Be thine the stall-fed lamb : or if they choose
The lamb, take thou, as next in rank, the ewe.

THYRSIS. Pray, by the Nymphs, pray, Goatherd, seat thee here
Against this hill-slope in the tamarish shade
(While I watch o'er thy goats), and pipe to me.

GOATHERD. I durst not, shepherd ; oh I durst not pipe
At noontide : fearing Pan, who at that hour
Rests him, o'erworn with hunting. Harsh is he,
And rancorous wrath sits ever on his lip.
But, Thyrsis, thou canst tell of Daphnis' woes ;
High is thy name for rural minstrelsy :
Then rest we in the shadow of the elm,
Fronting Priapus and the Fountain-nymphs.

There—where the oaks are, and the Shepherd's Seat—
Sing as thou sang'st erewhile, when matched with him
Of Libya, Cronis : and I'll give thee, first
A goat, to milk thrice daily, dam of twins ;
Though suckling twins, she'll fill two milk-pails full :
Next, a deep drinking-cup, scoured with sweet wax,
Two-handled, newly-carven, smacking yet
O' the chisel. Ivy reaches up and climbs,
Gilded with blossom-dust, about its lip ;
Round which a woodbine wreathes herself, and flaunts
Her saffron blossoms. Framed therein appears
A damsel—what a miracle of art !—
In robe and snood : and suitors at her side
With locks fair-flowing, one on either hand,
Battle with words ; their words touch ne'er her heart.
She, laughing, glances now on this, flings now
Her chance regards on that : they, all for love,
Wearied and eye-swoln labour but in vain.
Carven elsewhere, an ancient fisher stands

On the rough rocks. Thereto the old man with pains
 Drags his great casting-net, as one that toils
 Full stoutly. Every fibre of his frame
 Seems fishing: so about the gray-beard's neck
 (In might a stripling yet), the sinews swell.
 Hard by that wave-beat sire a vineyard bends
 Under its graceful load of ripened grapes:
 A boy sits on the rude fence watching it.
 Near him two foxes. Up and down the vines
 One ranges, pilfering sweets; and one assails
 With every wile his scrip: she'll leave him soon
 Stranded and supperless. He plaits meanwhile
 With ears of corn a right fine locust-trap,
 And fits it on a rush. For vines, for scrip,
 Little cares he, enamoured of his toy.

The cup is hung all round with bending briar,
 Triumph of Aeolian art, a wondrous sight.
 It was a ferrymen's of Calydon:
 A goat it cost me, and a great white cheese.
 And therewith will I grace thee, nothing loth,
 If for my sake thou'l sing the lay I love.
 Come, earn it, lad, and welcome. Thou may'st not
 Take thy songs with thee to the Silent Land.

THYRSIS.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.

Tis Thyrsis speaks, I, Thyrsis of the Hill.
 Where were ye, Nymphs, oh where, while Daphnis pined?
 In fair Peniūs' or in Pindus' glens?
 Not, surely, haunting great Anapus' stream
 Or Ætna's cliff, or Aci's sacred rill.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
 O'er him the wolves, o'er him the jackals howled:
 The lion in the oak-copse mourned his death.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
 The kine and oxen stood around his feet,
 The heifers and the calves wailed all for him.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
 First from the mountain Hermes came, and said,
 "Daphnis, who frets thee? Lad, whom lov'st thou so?"

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
 Came herdsmen, shepherds came, and goatherds came;
 All asked what ailed the lad. Priapus came
 And said, "Why pin'st, poor Daphnis? while the maid
 Foots it round every pool and every grove,

(*Begin, sweet Maide, begin the woodland song)*
 "To seek thee, who art love-distraught and froward.
 Herdsman in name, thou seem'st a goatherd now.
 Watching his kids at play, the goatherd's eyes
 Grow dim because he was not born a kid:
 And thine eyes, when they see the maidens smile,
 Are dim because thou canst not dance with them."
 Still nought the herdsman said: he drained alone
 His bitter portion, till the fatal end.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.

Came Aphrodite, smiles on her sweet face,
Sly smiles, yet heavy-hearted, and she spake.
"So, Daphnis, thou must try a fall with Love :
But sturdy Love hath won the fall of thee."

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
Then, "Grievous Aphrodite," Daphnis said,
"Accursed Aphrodite, mankind's foe !
Say'st thou mine hour is come, my sun hath set ?
Dead as alive, shall Daphnis work Love woe."

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Fly to Mount Ida, where the swain (men say)
And Aphrodite—to Anchises fly :
There are oak-coverts ; here but galingale,
And bees that make a music round the hives.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"To tending flocks Adonis owed his bloom,
To smiting hares, and bringing wild beasts down.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Face once more Diomedes : say, 'I slew
The herdsman Daphnis ; now I challenge thee.'

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Ye jackals, wolves, and mountain-ranging bears,
Farewell ! Ye'll see no more in wood, grove, glen,
Your herdsman Daphnis. Arethuse, farewell,
And ye fair streams that roll down Thymbria's steep !

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"See no more Daphnis, who leads here his kine,
Brings here to drink his oxen and his calves.

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Pan, Pan, oh whether great Lyceum's crags
Or mighty Mænarus thou haun'tst to-day,
Come to the Sicel isle ! Abandon now
Rhium and Helice, and the mountain-grave
(That e'en gods cherish) of Lycaon's son !

Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.
"Come, monarch ! Hither bring thy waxen pipe,
That windeth sweet as honey round thy lips,
For surely I am torn from life by Love.

Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.
"From thicket now and thorn let violets spring,
Now let white lilies drape the juniper,
And pines grow figs, and nature all go wrong :
For Daphnis dies. Let deer pursue the hounds,
And mountain-owls outsing the nightingale."

Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.
So spake he, and he never spake again.
And Aphrodite would have raised his head ;
But all his thread of life was spun ere now.
So in the stream plunged Daphnis. Styx's wave
Whelmed the Nymphs' darling and the Muses' friend.

Now give me goat, and cup : that I may milk
The one, and pour the other to the Muse.
Fare ye well, Muses, o'er and o'er farewell !
In days to come I'll sing strains sweeter yet.

GOATHERD. Thyrsis, let honey and the honeycomb
 Fill thy sweet mouth, and figs of Aigilus :
 For ne'er cicala sang so sweet a song.
 Here is the cup. Mark, friend, how sweet it smells.
 The Hours, thou'l say, have washed it in their well.
 Come here, Cissætha ! Thou, go milk her ! Kids,
 Be steady ; or your pranks will rouse the ram.

GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVELS.

BY JOHN MORLEY.

It has been very wisely said that the end and aim of all literature is, in truth, nothing but *a criticism of life*. The reason why so few novels have any place at all in literature proper is that so few of them exhibit even the feeblest sense of the need or possibility of such a criticism. Unhappily, it is not given to every writer who can spin a plot and piece together a few traits of character, labelling them with the name of a man or woman, to perceive that life moves from a thousand complicated and changing springs, and works into infinitely diversified results, which it is the highest interest of men to meditate upon. It demands an expansive energy, of which only the mind of rare vigour is capable, to shake oneself free from the shackles of one's own circumstance and condition, and thence to rise to a feeling of the breadth and height and unity of human fortunes. This feeling is the first and most valuable condition of all the higher kinds of literary production. Literature is the expression of this profound sentiment in all the varied forms—religious, poetic, philosophic—which it assumes in minds of various cast ; it is at once the noblest result and the finest gratification of man's curiosity about his own nature and his own lot. Men are fascinated by this criticism of life even when they are unconscious of what it is that attracts them. It gives a size and depth to a book by which the most stupid people cannot choose but be impressed, though their conceptions of what size

and depth come to may be of the haziest and dimmest. An author who can suggest this wide outlook over the world has got not only the prime element of success in his art, but the safest guarantee for an unbounded popularity into the bargain.

The writer of "Silas Marner" and of "Romola" is the delight of wise men and of fools for other reasons besides this; but underlying and pervading them all with an impenetrable subtlety is this sense, which even a dull mind cannot miss, of the huge size of circumstance, this consciousness of an attempt to fathom its depths, to measure its forces, to weigh its products in human life. This fathoming and measuring and weighing may be conducted with delicacy or with coarseness—with power or only with the affectation of power—with a truly adjusted balance and nice weights, or with weights that are hollow and a balance that has its tongue pressed into its place by artifice. In George Eliot's books the effect is produced by the most delicate strokes and the nicest proportions. In her pictures men and women fill the foreground, while thin lines and faint colour show us the portentous clouds of fortune or circumstance looming in the dim distance behind them and over their heads. She does not paint the world as a huge mountain with pygmies crawling or scrambling up its rugged sides to inaccessible peaks, and only tearing their flesh more or less for their pains. The difficulty of keeping this truthfulness

of proportion between effort and accomplishment, between the power of the individual and the might of circumstance, may be measured by the fewness of those who, either in poetry or in prose fiction, have even come near reaching the right pitch. Yet, without such a rightness of pitch, instead of criticism of life, we are only likely to get windy and bombastic bellowing about destiny from strong men, and from weak men only thin-voiced twitterings about drifting rose-leaves, the fleeting joys of the sons of earth, and the like unprofitable themes. And how is this pitch reached and maintained? It comes of the reflection being always kept close to the men and women whose conduct sets it in train. It does not wander wildly or with feeble diffusiveness over the wide fruitless field of things in general. "Silas Marner" is one of the shortest novels that ever were written; yet it contains an amount of deep suggestive reflection for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear which it would be hard to match in half a dozen of the longest that ever were written, so richly has the writer appreciated the great neglected truth that *people want texts and not sermons*. If a novel has any use at all apart from the idlest diversion and time-killing, it must be as a repertory of vivid texts, by which I certainly do not mean merely texts of morals, pointing only to the right and wrong of conduct, though this is the first standard, but those reflections also which lead people to work out for themselves notions of what is graceful and seemly, to teach themselves a more exquisite intellectual sensibility, and to enlarge their own scope of affection and intensity of passion. These are the rightful fruits of that pleasure which is the first aim of the novel-reader, and which he too often takes to be the only aim, and to be itself the fruit when in truth it is only the blossom. Each and all of George Eliot's novels abound in reflections that beckon on the alert reader into pleasant paths and fruitful fields of thought. The author gives herself no airs of finality, nor ever assumes that she can

tell you all that is to be said, or that when she has spoken the matter is at an end; but writes rather as one beneficently sowing seed, than as an envious hinderer and grudger of all reaping but her own. It is a pity that authors do not more generally borrow this self-denying ordinance. There is no difficulty in finding an illustration from nearly any chapter of any of her books. The first page I come upon in opening a volume of "Romola" contains a passage which will serve for example. The man who gradually became base by persistently trying to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, suddenly sees a path opening for him to unthought-of prizes through a threefold piece of deceit. The writer states the circumstances, and Tito's inability to resist the infamous temptation, and ends the matter with a couple of sentences: "Our lives make "a moral tradition for our individual "selves, as the life of mankind at large "makes a moral tradition for the race; "and to have once acted greatly seems "a reason why we should always be "noble. But Tito was feeling the effect "of an opposite tradition: he had won "no memories of self-conquest and per- "fet faithfulness from which he could "have a sense of falling." A stupid or lazy reader passes by a pregnant sentence of this sort with a slight persuasion that it is all right. For him it is only written in water. But then, if the authoress had expanded her remark into a discourse, the stupid reader and the lazy would have been as badly off as they are, because the slovenly impression which comes of reading a great deal about a thing is not worth a pin more than the slovenly impression which comes of reading five lines. Vagueness is vagueness and no more, whether it is big vagueness or little. Nobody who has got into the all-important habit of taking care that his mind works at ideas instead of allowing it to absorb their pale shadows—for absorption only gives you a shadow and not the vigorous reality—can miss the splendid value of this quality of George Eliot's writing. It promotes the active circulation of

ideas. It keeps the reader out of those dry ruts which prolonged elaboration of reflection always wears in the path, and which become so monotonous that the traveller ceases to look with any attention at the country through which he is being drawn. To be stopped short by a sentence that requires to be read over more than once is the best thing that can befall the novel-reader, or for that matter, any other sort of reader either. In "Felix Holt," again, one has been listening to the electioneering talk between the pushing man of the world in search of a vote, and the earnest old minister with his high-minded politics. After all, the writer concludes, "what we call illusions are often in truth a wider vision of past and present realities—a willing movement of a man's soul with the larger sweep of the world's forces—a movement towards a more assured end than the chances of a single life." There are only half a dozen lines here, but one might work them out with edification for half a dozen hours. There is in such passages as these that quality of condensation which is the essence of poetry. We feel that the writer is only removed by a step from the poetic region. And in "Romola," when the man who slipped into baseness has fallen at the hand of the man whom he had wronged, who has not been startled out of the excitement of the incident by the last three lines of the chapter?—"Who shall put his finger on the work of justice and say, 'It is there!' Justice is like the kingdom of God—it is not without us as a fact, it is within us as a great yearning." Or when Tito, in his panic at seeing the old Baldassare, could bethink himself of nothing but to charge him with being mad, consider the terse profundity of the author's comment:—"He hardly knew how the words had come to his lips. There are moments when our passions speak and decide for us, and we seem to stand by and wonder; they carry in them an inspiration of crime, that in one instant does the work of long pre-meditation." All this is the true

criticism of life in its most comprehensive sense, including criticism by the creation of character, by the imaginary play of invented circumstance and assumed motive, by large and widely-suggestive comment. The pictures of country life in which all this writer's books are so inimitably rich owe half their charm to this critical or illustrative quality. They are pictures that do much more than tell us a mere story, because the artist has made them to represent so many of the episodes which go to compose the larger story of human existence, and keeps before us—or at least before anybody who has an eye for anything deeper than fun—the poetic truth that life, "like a dome of many-coloured glass, stains the white radiance of eternity." Hence the fewness of the characters. If there were more people on the scene, there would be the less space for the ripe and sustained meditation upon each, which gives to these writings a peculiar *impressiveness* that sometimes falls little short of being absolutely holy. From Romola down to Denner, the old waiting-woman, every figure stands out as if wrought in marble, and where the figure is of sufficiently heroic mould, we feel the same awe as is inspired by fine sculpture or fine architecture. There is the effect as of an almost sacred repose.

George Eliot is one of the few thinkers who can see the weakness of humanity, and the comparatively disappointing and mean nature of most objects of pursuit, without being driven by the violence of a common reaction into transcendental artifices. Nobody in her books is made to talk of rapture as a mood of happiness, or as the remedy for failure and the littleness of things. Practical resignation to the harshness and inflexibility of many of those conditions which are the material that a man has to make his life out of, and a sober, not ecstatic, resolution to seize such elements as remain, and force them into the pattern which we have chosen for ourselves; this is a state of feeling and will which seems to count for a great deal more with her than any solace which can

come of beatific mystic visions, and discourse of eternal unspeakable aspirations. There is no chance of her ever preaching to men in words which they cannot profess to comprehend and to act upon. "In those times, as now," she says of the fifteenth century, "there were human beings who never saw angels or heard perfectly clear messages." And these human beings are scarcely thought too much in the wrong by a person who goes on to say, "Such truth as came to them was brought confusedly in the voices and deeds of men, not at all like the seraphs of unfailing wing and piercing vision—men who believed falsities as well as truths, and did the wrong as well as the right. The helping hands stretched out to them were the hands of men who stumbled and often saw dimly, so that these beings, unvisited by angels, had no other choice than to grasp that stumbling guidance along the path of reliance and action, which is the path of life, or else to pause in loneliness and disbelief, which is no path, but the arrest of inaction and death." In no page of her books is there any sympathy with that kind of teaching which makes big words the healers and guides of men. Some people complain that there is a lack of grandeur and elevation in this. A placid and even study of men and women as they are, with all their foibles, and stumbling, and shortsightedness, seems to such critics too tame and too little edifying, and needs to be inspired with something more of eager passion and inflaming enthusiasm. That the author can understand this as well as the lower and more commonplace moods of the human mind, her splendid conception of Savonarola sufficiently proves. At a lower height than Savonarola—the highest level on which she commonly works—the single-minded Dinah Morris, the noble Romola, the fine-hearted hero of her last novel, are examples enough of her ability to enter into the best and loftiest parts of human nature. But she does not create beings of superhuman nature. Consequently, those who love to find the characters of a novel hoping

and thinking and talking etherially, as seraphs may be supposed to do, or as people do in some German novels, are disappointed. The lovers of *Werteriem*—and many of them still survive in one shape or other—find no iota of their favourite creed. The flapping of the wings of the transcendental angel is not heard in George Eliot's compositions. She can produce a truer effect out of sober elevation of thought than the most brilliant writer of the transcendental stamp out of an artificial elevation of language. An author of great and highly polished genius, and whose prolonged enthusiasm for art and letters scarcely meets just now with all the recognition it deserves—Lord Lytton—begins to describe one of his characters by saying, that "there is a certain virtue within us, comprehending our subtlest and noblest emotions, which is poetry while untold, and grows pale and poor in proportion as we strain it into poems." This is very well, but one is surely only surrounded by haze in what follows. "This mere spiritual sensibility dwelt in Helen, as the latent mesmerism in water, as the invisible fairy in an enchanted ring. It was an essence or divinity shrined or shrouded in herself, which gave her more intimate and vital union with all the influences of the universe; a companion to her loneliness, an angel hymning low to her own listening soul. This made her enjoyment of nature in its merest trifles exquisite and profound; this gave to her tendencies of heart all the delicious and sportive variety love borrows from imagination; this lifted her piety above the mere forms of conventional religion, and breathed into her prayers the ecstasy of the saints." We have a vague idea what all this means, but it is vague, and it conveys no sense of reality; we don't have any clearer or fuller notion about Helen after all has been said. Compare with this a sort of corresponding character as drawn by George Eliot. Romola's "enthusiasm was continually stirred to fresh vigour by the influence of Savonarola. In

" spite of the wearisome visions and " allegories, from which she recoiled in " disgust when they came as stale " repetitions from other lips than his, " her strong affinity for his passionate " sympathy and the splendour of his " aims had lost none of its power . . . " His special care for liberty and purity " of government in Florence, with his " constant reference of this immediate " object to the wider end of a universal " regeneration, had created in her a new " consciousness of the great drama of " human existence, in which her life " was a part; and, through her daily " helpful contact with the less fortunate " of her fellow-citizens, this new con- " sciousness became something stronger " than a vague sentiment: it grew into " a more and more definite motive of " self-denying practice. . . . Her trust " in Savonarola's nature as greater than " her own made a large part of the " strength she had found. And the " trust was not to be lightly shaken. " It is not force of intellect which " causes ready repulsion from the aberrations " of greatness, any more than it " is force of vision that causes the eye " to explore the warts on a face bright " with human expression; it is simply " the negation of high sensibilities. " Romola was so deeply moved by the " grand energies of Savonarola's nature, " that she found herself listening pa- " tiently to all dogmas and prophecies " when they came in the vehicle of his " ardent faith and believing utterance." I do not wish to institute an invidious and quite useless comparison between the two writers, each of whom has singular power, but what I do wish to point out, by quoting these two passages side by side, is, that an angel hymning low to a woman's listening soul and so lifting her above conventional forms means nothing, while the effecting of the same result by a contagious enthusiasm, caught from an ardent and passionate apostle, means a great deal. The first is mere romance; the second is common sense, which even a romance-writer cannot shirk with impunity.

But still it is not a low common

sense which never rises above the ground. It is nothing like the common sense of De Foe or of Swift; but borrows something at once from the sobriety of the only half-poetic mind of the eighteenth century, and from the quaint richness and fancy of the sixteenth, and from the height and freshness of the beginning of the nineteenth. Emphatically realist in her style, yet she is realist in a sense to which not many other novelists or dramatists can lay claim, and in which there are none of those characteristics that have made realism in contemporary fiction only another name for a steady and exclusive devotion to a study of all the meanest or nastiest elements in character and conduct. There is no blinking of the eyes to the part which debts and want of money, and uncontrolled impure desires, and all other sordid or foul circumstances play in life: only, on the other hand, these lurking ugly things which pluck back the feet of men and women in the path, are not painted from under the microscope, while better things are left in their bare unmagnified dimensions. Thus, with fine artistic moderation, and just completeness, which in art comes of moderation, she steers clear of the Charybdis of depraved realism, without falling into the Scylla of sentimentalism. She never sets up a character merely for the purpose of sneering at him, or showing what a bad or mean fellow he is, and how many people there are in the world just as bad and mean. And she never makes her men and women only listening souls to which angels may spend their time in hymning low tunes; which is really a great recommendation in a world where most people have bodies, and are more or less cloudy about souls. Who would not willingly surrender all that has been written about the low tunes, in exchange for Dolly Winthrop's explanation to Silas Marner of the ways of God to man?

One of George Eliot's most characteristic traits is that she excludes the innate villainy of the human heart from her theory of things. Except perhaps the man who steals the money and throws

the blame on Silas Marner, she gives us, I believe, no other ready-made scoundrel. She does not accept the doctrine that scoundrels are ready-made. The troubles which beset men are mostly the fruit of their weakness, and very little the fruit of any inborn devilishness. It is because they falter and play the fool with their own conscience, and trust to "the great god Chance" to find them a way back to virtue and happiness, that they fall into sin and misery, and lead others into the same ill plight. As a rule they don't mean very badly. Arthur Donnithorne allowed himself to slide cautiously down the slope towards wrong-doing, until passion had got impetus enough to hurry him uncontrollably in to the thorny noisome pit at the bottom. Tito, also, was a good fellow enough, only he did not like the things which in themselves are not likeable—labour, sacrifice, pain, hardness. So he avoided them. And then we are made to see how men seldom go down into the pit alone. Their act of weakness is a curse to everybody whose hand is even indirectly linked with theirs. A discord is struck into the life of a Romola, an Adam Bede, which never ceases to vibrate, and a shadow thrown over the future of the innocent which may grow fainter, but never fades away to leave an unstained light. And in her last novel, the presence of an old dead repented weakness hovering darkly over a life is vivid before us—the ghost of the past rising ghastly to poor Mrs. Transome, like Banquo at Macbeth's feast. Though she extenuates the motives which lead men into mistakes, she does not soften their consequences. A curse may be brought down by nothing more hateful than weakness, but it is just as much a curse as if it were the divine retribution for downright malignity and blackheartedness. Precisely as the criticism of art discloses the laws and principles of beauty, the criticism of life traces the working of the more momentous laws of circumstance and character and conduct. Of these are there any more vast in their extent, and therefore more important for us to ponder, than

that the consequence flows upon others from the act, though often from the motive upon the actor; that lack of strength is the main cause of crime and wrong, and not lack of general good-will to virtue; that Nemesis attends the weak as eternally and relentlessly as the wicked, and that penitence does not appease her? To be able to set all this forth, as George Eliot has done, not as thin unillumined commonplace, but in its largest significance and its visible working, is the gift of a very rare natural temper fertilised by an uncommon culture.

From this keen perception of the share which weakness usurps in mortal affairs flows the writer's humour, the quality to which she owes so much of her popularity among people who are Gallios in all things grave. The contemplation of weakness may stir up one of two emotions, according to the circumstances in which the weakness is displayed. Weakness ought always to make us sorry for the weak man, but it may not always make us so sorry for him as to keep us from genial mirth,—one of the wholesomest kinds of feeling. Beneficent pity and genial mirth are two phases of the same mood, two colours of the same sentiment. It is the kind of weakness that determines for the feeling which of these two it shall assume. It is the effect of simple weakness to make one smile, but when pain and misery follow from it then men smile no more. This explains the inseparable connexion between humour and pathos. Nobody has one without having the other also; though circumstances or natural bent may incline a poetic mind more strongly in one direction than the other. Humour is at the lower end of the scale, and it rises by imperceptible intervals up to pathos. In the "Mill on the Floss," for example, it is the same temper which underlies the exquisitely humorous description of the cares and worries of Mrs. Glegg and Sister Pullet, and the exquisitely pathetic description of that scene when "brother and sister" "lived over again in one supreme moment the days when they had clasped their little hands in love, and roamed

"the daisied fields together." The first comes of the contemplation of simple weakness and littleness and narrowness ; the other derives its force from the contemplation of the misery which had followed from weakness coming in fatal contact with harshness and austerity.

A passage which illustrates the joining point where humour passes into pathos, as well as so shifting and barely perceptible a point can be illustrated, may be found somewhere in "*Silas Marner*." The writer is talking of the lives of old squires and farmers.

"Calamities came to *them* too, and "their early errors carried hard conse-
"quences : perhaps the love of some
"sweet maiden, the image of purity,
"order and calm, had opened their eyes
"to the vision of a life in which the
"days would not seem too long, even
"without rioting ; but the maiden was
"lost, and the vision passed away, and
"then what was left to them, especially
"when they had become too heavy for
"the hunt, or for carrying a gun over
"the furrows, but to drink and get
"merry, or to drink and get angry, so
"that they might be independent of
"variety, and say over again, with eager
"emphasis, the things they had already
"said any time that twelvemonth ?"

There is a *humaneness* of spirit in such writing as this which throws a reader into the mood that lies midway between laughter and tears, and makes him ready to incline to one nearly as much as the other. Kindly irony is the nearest approach which the humorous temper can make to earnest reprobation, and we never find anything harsher in George Eliot. She would not have invented a sea-monster for the sake of inflicting grim and bloody vengeance on the bad Sieur Clubin, as M. Victor Hugo does. She scarcely adopts the idea that Providence or Destiny is always on the watch to seize bad men from without. The *piewre* had received no harm from Sieur Clubin, so scarcely had a right to suck his blood, and it is the very gist of true poetic justice that men should not be punished for their sins by artificial devils *ex machina*. It

would have been enough for George Eliot, as it is for Mr. Carlyle when he encounters Sieur Clubin in history, to leave the poor wretch to make as much of his villainy as he could, and wish almost in good humour that he might be the better for it. For she is plainly persuaded that after all "a rogue is only a fool with a circumbendibus."

Like Mr. Carlyle, too, in this, as in a great many other points, George Eliot perceives that the only course for honest and worthy folk in the tangle which fools, with or without circumbendibuses, contrive to make of the world, is to stick to the work that the hand findeth to do. "What right hast thou to be happy ? First say what right hast thou to be." This is Mr. Carlyle's way of putting the case, and we hear the voice of Herr Texfelsdröckh and the "Everlasting Yea" when Romola declares to Lillo, "We can only have the highest happiness, such as goes along with being a great man, by having wide thoughts and much feeling for the rest of the world, as well as for ourselves ; and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it, that we can only tell it from misery by its being what we would choose before everything else, because our souls see it is good. There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world, that no man can be great—he can hardly keep himself from wickedness—unless he gives up thinking much about pleasures or rewards, and gets strength to endure what is hard or painful. My father had the greatness that belongs to integrity ; he chose poverty and obscurity rather than falsehood." The spirit of "*Felix Holt*" is identical with the spirit of this passage ; so is the "*Mill on the Floss*." Only in her last book the doctrine is applied by Felix Holt, and Esther his love, in a practical way, which nobody can help understanding. Like the old man, Bardo, the young Felix chooses poverty and obscurity rather than a competence which involved habitual insincerity. Esther, too, chooses poverty and obscurity rather than sacrifice for the sake of their oppo-

sites the higher aims of a pure and noble life, bound up as they were with the resolute poverty of the man who had inspired her with them. "My daughter," Savonarola said, "your life is not as a 'grain of sand to be blown by the 'winds ; it is a thing of flesh and blood 'that dies if it be sundered." Esther felt, and the reader is made to see how she came to feel it, that wealth is a sorry prize to be won by the pain and ruin of such a sundering. It has been complained that this refusal of a big inheritance, this casting away of a livelihood, is Quixotic and preposterous. People, it is said, nowadays, never dream of doing this sort of thing. Yet we may be quite sure that any individual man of those who take this ground, would be extremely insulted and angry if you told him that he, personally, was absolutely incapable, except in tiny trifles, of making a sacrifice of money for the sake of a high principle. And any individual woman too would be very bitter if she were supposed to be absolutely incapable of loving a man so disinterestedly as to be willing to sacrifice a certain quantity of ormolu clocks, and fine mirrors, and Turkey carpets, and silk gowns for the sake of living with him. But it is a very common thing, I find, in more subjects than one, to assume that, though individually each of us is an extremely high-minded and virtuous person, in the aggregate we are never actuated by any but the lowest, narrowest, and most sordid motives. Even granting, however, that Mr. Carlyle is no calumniator when he says that most people are fools, George Eliot might possibly find a sufficient barrier against these anti-Quixotic people in Goethe's saying, that if you would improve a man, the best plan is to suppose that he is already what you wish to make him.

A great deal might be said on the influence which George Eliot's books

cannot but have in the great movement of which we are the half-unconscious witnesses in the sphere of religion. The remarks which she scatters by the wayside of her narrative are such as can scarcely offend the weakest brother. For unless one has already acquired a frame and temper open for their reception, they will inevitably glance off without effect from the reader's mind. But they are φωνήτα συνεργάτη, full of meaning and suggestiveness to those who would fain see the invigoration of belief by the effusion into it of a current of lofty and fertilising ideas drawn from a wide and generous observation of life as it is. To introduce a rich humanness into the popular conception of religious belief, and to spread the conviction that openness of mind is not inconsistent with religious devotion, are two of the noblest ends which a writer can hope to have a share in promoting. There cannot be much higher praise for a book than that it tends to bring men nearer to one another, and to cease from the judgment of one another on the too narrow grounds of conformity to or revolt against a traditional orthodoxy. There is scarcely another living writer whose influence, though working with so little parade of its ultimate significance, is likely to be so effective as George Eliot's in this direction.

I have only to notice one thing more, and that is, how thoroughly these novels show to people who write, that style is not the result of reading, but of thinking. It is not the assiduous cultivation of a style, as such, but the cultivation of the intellect and feelings, which produces good writing. Style comes of brooding over ideas, not over words. It is because George Eliot lets ideas lie long and ripen in her own mind that their fruitage of expression is so delicate in flavour and so rich and diversified in colour.

CRADOCK NOWELL: A TALE OF THE NEW FOREST.

BY RICHARD DODDRIDGE BLACKMORE.

CHAPTER LIX.

THAT night there had been great excitement in the village of Nowelhurst. A rumour had reached it that Cradock Nowell, loved in every cottage there, partly as their own production, partly as their future owner, partly for his own sake, and most of all for his misfortunes, was thrown into prison to stand his trial for the murder of his brother. Another rumour was that, to prevent any scandal to the nobility, he had been sent to sea alone in a seventy-four gun ship, with corks in her bottom tied with wire arranged so as to fly all at once, same as if it was ginger-beer bottles, on the seventh day, when the salt-water had turned the wires rusty.

It is hard to say of these two reports which roused the greater indignation; perhaps on the whole the former did, because the latter was supposed to be according to institution. Anyhow, all the village was out in the street that night; and the folding of arms, and the self-importance, the confidential winks, and the power to say more (but for hyper-Nestorean prudence) were at their acme in a knot of gaffers gathered around Rufus Hutton, and affording him good sport.

Nothing now could be done in Nowelhurst without Rufus Hutton. He had that especial knack (mistaken sometimes in a statesman for really high qualities) which becomes in a woman true capacity for gossip. By virtue thereof Rufus Hutton was now prime-minister of Nowelhurst; and Sir Cradock, the king, being nothing more now than the shadow of a name, his deputy's power was absolute. He knew the history by this time of every cottage, and pigsty, and tombstone in the churchyard; how much every man got every week, and how much he gave his wife out of it,

what he had for dinner on Sundays, and how long he made his waistcoat last. Suddenly the double-barrelled noise which foreruns a horse at full gallop came from the bridge, and old folk hobbled, and young got ready to run.

"Hooraw—hooraw!" cried a dozen and a half of boys, "here be Hempror o' Roosia coming."

Boys will believe almost anything, when they get excited (having taken the trick from their fathers), but even the women were disappointed, when the galloping horse stopped short in the crowd, and from his withers shot forward, and fell with both hands full of mane, a personage not more august than the porter at Brockenhurst Station.

"Catch the horse, you fool!" cried Rufus.

"Cuss the horse," said the porter, trying to draw breath; "better been under a train I had. Don't stand gaping, chawbacons. Is ever a sawbones, surgeon, doctor, or what the devil you call them in these outlandish parts, to be got for love or money?"

"I am a sawbones," said Rufus Hutton, coming forward with his utmost dignity; "and it's a mercy I don't saw yours, young man, if that's all you know of riding."

The porter touched his hair instead of his hat (which was gone long ago), while the "chawbacons" rallied, and laughed at him, and one offered him a "zide-zaddle," and all the women of the village felt that Dr. Hutton had quenched the porter, and vindicated Nowelhurst.

"When you have recovered your breath, young man," continued Rufus, pushing, as he always did, his advantage; "and thanked God for your escape from the first horse you ever mounted, perhaps you will tell us your errand, and we chawbacons will consider it."

A gruff haw-haw and some treble he-he's added to the porter's discomfiture, for he could not come to time yet, being now in the second tense of exhaustion, which is even worse than the first, being rather of the heart than lungs.

"Station—Mr. Garnet—dead!" was all the man could utter, and that only in spasms, and with great chest-heavings.

Rufus Hutton leaped on the horse in a moment, caught up old Channing's stick, and was out of sight in the summer dusk ere any one else in the crowd had done more than gape, and say, "Oh Lor!" By dint of skill he sped the old horse nearly as quickly to the station as the fury of Jehu had brought him thence, and landed him at the door with far less sign of exhaustion. Then walking into the little room, in the manner of a man who thoroughly knows his work, he saw a sight which never in this world will leave him.

Upon a hard sofa, shored up with an ash-log where the mahogany was sprung, and poked up into a corner as if to get a bearing, there, with blankets piled upon him from the red-brick house beyond the level crossing, and his great head hanging over the rise where the beading of the brass ends, lay the ill-fated Bull Garnet,—a man from birth to death a subject for the pity of God. Fifty years old—more than fifty years—and scarce a twelvemonth of happiness since the shakings of the world began, and childhood's dream was over. Toiling ever for the future, toiling for his children, ever since he had them, labouring to make peace with God, if only he might have his own, where passion is not, but love abides. The room smelled strongly of bad brandy, some of which was oozing now down his broad square chin, and dripping from the great blue jaw. Of course he could not swallow it; and now one of the women (for three had rushed in) was performing that duty for him.

"Turn out that drunken hag," cried Dr. Hutton, feeling he had no idea how. "Up with the window. Bring the sofa here; and take all but one of those blankets off."

"But, master," objected another woman, "he'll take his death of cold."

"Turn out that woman also!" He was instantly obeyed. "Now roll up one of those blankets, and put it under his head here—this side, can't you see? Good God, what a set of fellows you are to let a man's head hang down like that! Hot water and a sponge this instant. Nearly boiling, mind you. Plenty of it, and a foot-tub. Now don't stare at me."

With a quick light hand he released the blue and turgid throat from the narrow neck-tie, then laid his forefinger upon the heart and watched the eyelids intently.

"Appleplexy, no doubt, master," said the most intelligent of the men; "I have 'eared that if you can bleed them"—

"Hold your tongue, or I'll phlebotomise you." That big word inspired universal confidence, because no one understood it. "Now, support him in that position, while I pull his boots off. One of you run to the inn for a bottle of French cognac—not this filthy stuff, mind—and a corkscrew and a teaspoon. Now the hot water here! In with his feet, and bathe his legs, while I sponge his face and chest—as hot as you can bear your hands in it. His heart is all but stopped, and his skin as cold as ice. That's it; quicker yet! Don't be afraid of scalding him. There, he begins to feel it."

The dying man's great heavy eyelids slowly and feebly quivered, and a long deep sigh arose, but there was not strength to fetch it. Dr. Hutton took advantage of the faint impulse of life to give him a little brandy, and then a little more again, and by that time he could sigh.

"Bo," he whispered, as softly as most of us do to a goose—I mean, of course, a wealthy one—and Rufus Hutton knew somehow (perhaps by means of his own child) that he was trying to say, "Bob."

"Bob will be here directly. Cheer up, cheer up, till he comes, my friend."

He called him his friend, and the very next day he would have denounced

him as murderer to the magistrates at Lymington. Now his only thought was of saving the poor man's life.

The father's dull eyes gleamed again when he heard those words, and a little smile came flickering over his ash-grey face. They gave him more brandy on the strength of it, while he kept on looking at the door.

"Rub, rub, rub, men; very lightly, but very quickly. Keep your thumbs up, don't you see? Mustn't get cold again for the world. There now, he'll keep his heart up until his dear son arrives. And then his children shall nurse him, much better than any one else could; and how glad they will be, John Thomas, to see him looking so well and so strong again!"

All this time, Rue Hutton himself, with a woman's skill and tenderness, was encouraging, by gentle friction over the stagnant heart, each feeble impulse yet to live, each little bubble faintly rising from the well of hope, every clinging of the soul to the things so hard to leave behind. "While there is life, there is hope." True and genial saying! And we hope there is hope beyond it.

Poor Bull Garnet was taken home, even that very night. For Dr. Hutton saw how much he was longing for his children, who (until he was carried in) knew nothing of his danger. "Please God," said Rufus to himself, as he crouched in the fly by the narrow mattress, even foregoing his loved cheroot, and keeping his hand on his patient's pulse; "please God, the poor fellow shall breathe his last with a child at either side of him."

Meanwhile, an urgent message from Sir Cradock Nowell was awaiting the sick man at his cottage. Eoa herself had brought word to Pearl (of whom she longed to make a friend), that her uncle was walking about the house, perpetually walking, calling aloud in every room for Mr. Garnet and John Rosedew. He had heard of no disaster, any more than she had, for he seldom read the papers now; but Mr. Brockwood had been with him a very

long time that morning, and Dr. Buller came in accidentally; and Eoa could almost vow that there was some infamous scheme on foot, and she knew whose doing it was; and oh that Uncle John would come back! But now they wanted Mr. Garnet, and he must hurry up to the Hall the moment he came home.

Mr. Garnet, of course, they could not have: his strength was wrecked, his heart benumbed, his mind incapable of effort, except to know his children, if that could ever be one. And in this paralytic state, never sleeping, never waking, never wholly conscious, he lay for weeks; and time for him had neither night nor morning.

But Mr. Rosedew could be brought to help his ancient friend, if only it was in his power to overlook the injury. He did not overlook it. For that he was too great a man. He utterly forgot it. To his mind it was thenceforth a thing that had never happened:—

"To-morrow either with black cloud
Let the Father fill the heaven,
Or with sun full-blazing:
Yet shall He not erase the past,
Nor beat abroad, and make undone,
What once the fleeting hour hath borne."

Truly so our Horace saith. And yet that Father gives, sometimes, to the noblest of his children, power to revoke the evil, or at least annul it,—grandeur to undo the wrong done by others to them. Not with any sense of greatness, neither hope of self-reward, simply from the lovingkindness of the deep humanity.

And yet it was a noble thing, such as not even the d^riest man, gapped and carked with care and evil, worn with undeserved rebuff, and dwelling ever underground, in the undermining of his faith, could behold and not be glad with a joy unbidden, could turn away from without wet eyes, and a glimpse of the God who loves us,—and yet the simplest, mildest scene that a child could describe to its mother. So will I tell it, if may be, casting all long words away, leaning on an old man's staff, looking over the stile of the world.

It was the height of the summer-time, and the quiet mood of the setting sun touched with calm and happy sadness all he was forsaking. Men were going home from work; wives were looking for them; maidens by the gate or paling longed for some protection; children must be put to bed, and what a shame, so early! Puce and purple pillows lay, holding golden locks of sun, piled and lifted by light breezes, the painted eider-down of sunset. In the air a feeling was—those who breathe it cannot tell—only this, that it does them good; God knows how, and why, and whence—but it makes them love their brethren.

The poor old man, more tried and troubled than a lucky labourer, wretched in his wealth, worse hampered by his rank and placement, sat upon a high oak chair—for now he feared to lean his head back—and prayed for some one to help him. Oh, for any one who loved him; oh, for any sight of God, whom in his pride he had forgotten! Eoa was a darling, his only comfort now; but what could such a girl do? Who was she to meet the world? And the son he had used so shamefully. Good God, his only son! And now he knew, with some strange knowledge, loose, and wide, and wandering, that his son was innocent after all, and lost to him for ever, through his own vile cruelty. And now they meant to prove him mad,—what use to disguise it?—him who once had the clearest head, chairman of the Quarter Sessions—

Here he broke down, and lay back, with his white hair poured against the carved black oak of the chair, and his wasted hands flung downward, only praying God to help him, anyhow to help him.

Then John Rosedew came in softly, half-ashamed of himself, half-nervous lest he were presuming, overdrawing the chords of youth, the bond of the days when they went about with arm round the neck of each other. In his heart was pity, very deep and holy; and yet, of all that filled his eyes, the very last to show itself.

Over against the ancient friend, the loved one of his boyhood, he stopped and sadly gazed a moment, and then withdrew with a shock and sorrow, as of death brought nearer. At the sound, Sir Cradock Nowell lifted his weary eyes and sighed; and then he looked intently; and then he knew the honest face, the smile, the gentle forehead. Quietly he arose, with colour flowing over his pallid cheeks, and in his eyes strong welcome, and ready with his lips to speak, yet in his heart unable. Thereupon he held the chair, and bowed with the deepest reverence, such as king or queen receives not till a life has earned it. Even the hand which he was raising he let fall again, drawn back by a bitter memory, and a nervous shame.

But his friend of olden time would not have him so disgraced, wanted no repentance. With years of kindness in his eyes and the history of friendship, he came, without a bow, and took the hand that now was shy of him.

"Cradock, oh, I am so glad."

"John, thank God for this, John!"

Then they turned to other subjects, with a sort of nervousness, the one for fear of presuming on pardon, the other for fear of offering it. Only both knew, once for all, that nothing more could come between them till the hour of death.

And, over and above the ease of conscience, and the sense of comfort, it was a truly happy thing for poor Sir Cradock Nowell, when the loss of the *Taprobane* could no longer be concealed from him, that now he had the proven friend to fall back upon once more. He had spent whole days in writing letters,—humble, loving, imploring, letters to the son in unknown latitudes,—directing them as fancy took him to the Cape, to Port Natal, Mozambique, or even Bombay (in case of stress of weather), Point de Galle, Colombo, &c. &c. in all cases to be called for, and invariably marked "urgent." Then from this labour of love he awoke to a vague form of conviction that his letters ought to have been addressed to the bottom of the sea.

CHAPTER LX.

AUTUMN in the forest now, once again the autumn. All things turning to their rest, bird, and beast, and vegetable. Solemn and most noble season, speaking to the soul of man, as spring speaks to his body. The harvest of the ample woods spreading every tint of ripeness, waiting for the Maker's sickle, when His breath is frost. Trees beyond trees, in depth, and height, roundings and massive juttings, some admitting flaws of light to enhance their mellowness, some very bright of their own accord, when the sun thought well of them, others scarcely bronzed with age, and meaning to abide the spring. It was the same in Epping Forest, Richmond Park, and the woods round London, only on a smaller scale, and with less variety. And so upon his northern road, every coppice, near or far, even "Knockholt Beeches" (which reminded him of the "beechen hats"), every little winding wood of Sussex or Surrey brought before Cradock Nowell's eyes the prospect of his boyhood. He had begged to be put ashore at Newhaven, from the American trader, which had rescued him from Pomona Island, and his lonely but healthful sojourn, and then borne him to New York. Now, with his little store of dollars, earned from the noble Yankee skipper by the service he had rendered him, freely given, and freely taken, as behoves two gentlemen, and with his great store of health recovered, and recovered mind, he must walk all the way to London, forty miles or more; so great a desire entered into him of his native land, that stable versatility, those free and ever-changing skies, which all her sons abuse and love.

Cradock looked, I do assure you, as well, and strong, and stout, and lusty, as may consist with elegance at the age of two-and-twenty. And his dress, though smacking of Broadway, "could not conceal," as our best writers say, "his symmetrical proportions." His pantaloons were of a fine bright tan colour, with pockets fit for a thousand

dollars, and his boots full of eyelets, like big lampreys, and his coat was a thing to be proud of, and a pleasing surprise for Regent Street. His hat, moreover, was umbratile, as of the Pilgrim Fathers, with a liquid measure of capacity (betwixt the cone and the turned-up rim) superior to that of the ordinary cisterns of the London water-companies. Nevertheless he had not acquired the delightful hydropulsive art, distinctive of the mighty nation which had been so kind to him. And, in spite of little external stuff (only worthy of two glances—one to note, and the other to smile at it), the youth was improved in every point worth a man's observation. Three months in New York had done him an enormous deal of good; not that the place is by any means heavenly (perhaps there are few more hellish), only that he fell in with men of extraordinary energy, and of marvellous decision, the very two hinges of life whereupon he (being rather too "philosophical") had several screws loose, and some rust in the joints.

As for Wena, she (the beauty) had cocked her tail with great arrogance at smelling English ground again. To her straight came several dogs, who had never travelled far (except when they were tail-piped), and one and all cried, "Hail, my dear! Have you seen any dogs to compare with us? Set of mongrel parley-woos, can't bark or bite like a Christian. Just look round the corner, pretty, while we kill that poodle."

To whom Wena—*leniter atterens caudam*—"Cordially I thank you. So much now I have seen of the world that my faith is gone in tail-wags. If you wish to benefit by my society, bring me a bit from the hock of bacon, or a very young marrow-bone. Then will I tell you something." They could not comply with her requisitions, because they had eaten all that themselves. And so she trotted along the beach, like the dog of Polyphemus, or the terrier of Hercules, who tinged his nose with murex.

'Tis a very easy thing to talk of walking fifty miles, but quite another

pair of shoes to do it; especially with pack on back, and feet that have lost habitual sense of Macadam's tender mercies. Moreover, the day had been very warm for the beginning of October—the dying glance of Summer, in the year 1860, at her hitherto foregone and forgotten England. The highest temperature of the year had been 72° (in the month of May); in June and July, 66° and 68° were the maxima, and in August things were no better. Persistent rain, perpetual chill, and ever-present sense of icebergs, and longing for logs of dry wood. But towards the end of September some glorious weather set in; and people left off fires at the time when they generally begin them. Therefore, Cradock Nowell was hot, footsore, and slightly jaded, as he came to the foot of Sydenham Hill, on the second day of his journey. The Crystal Palace, which long had been his landmark through country cross roads, shone with blue and airy light, as the sun was sinking. Cradock admired more and more, as the shadows sloped along it, the fleeting gleams, the pellucid depth, the brightness of reflection framed by the softness of refraction.

He had always loved that building, and now, at the top of the hill, he resolved (weary as he was) to enter and take his food there. Accordingly Wena was left to sup and rest at the stables; he paid the shilling that turns the wheel, and went first to the refreshment court. After doing his duty there, he felt a great deal better; then buttoned his coat like a Briton, and sauntered into the transept. It had been a high and mighty day, for the Ancient Order of Mountaineers (who had never seen a mountain) were come to look for one at Penge, with sweethearts, wives, contingencies, and continuations. It boots not now to tell their names; enough that they had been very happy, and were gathering back in nave and transept for a last parade. To Cradock, so long accustomed to sadness, solitude, and bad luck, the scene, instead of being ludicrous (as a youth of fashion would have found it), was interesting and im-

pressive, and even took a solemn aspect as the red rays of the sun retired, and the mellow shades were deepening. He leaned against the iron rail in front of the grand orchestra, and seeing many pretty faces, thought about his Amy, and wondered what she now was like, and whether she were true to him. From Pomona Island, he could not write; from New York he had never written; not knowing the loss of the *Taprobane*, and fearing lest he should seem once more to be trying the depth of John Rosedew's purse. But now he was come to England, with letters from Captain Recklesome Young, to his London correspondents, which ensured him a good situation, and the power to earn his own bread, and perhaps in a little while Amy's.

As he leaned and watched the crowd go by, like a dream of faces, the events of the bygone year passed also in dark parade before him. Sad, mysterious, undeserved—at least so far as he knew—how had they told upon him? Had they left him in better, or had they left him in bitter, case with his God and his fellow-man? That question might be solved at once, to any but himself, by the glistening of his eyes, the gentleness of his gaze around, the smile with which he drew back his foot when a knicker-bockered child trod on it. He loved his fellow-creatures still; and love is law and gospel.

While he thought these heavy things, feeling weary of the road, of his life half-weary, shrinking from the bustling world again to be encountered, suddenly a grand vibration thrilled his heart, and mind, and soul. From the great concave above him, melody was spreading wide, with shadowy resistless power, like the wings of angels. The noble organ was pealing forth, rolling to every nook of the building, sweeping over the heads of the people and into their hearts (with one soft passport), "Home, sweet home!" The men who had come because tired of home, the wives to give them a change of it, the maidens perhaps to get homes of their own, the children to cry to go home again;—all

with one accord stood still, all listened very quietly, and said nothing at all about it. Only they were the better for it, with many a kind old memory rising, at least among the elder ones, and many a large unselfish hope making the young people look, with trust, at one another.

And what did Cradock Nowell feel? His home was not a sweet one; bitter things had been done against him; bitter things he himself had done. None the less, he turned away and wept beneath a music-stand, as if his heart would never give remission to his eyes. None could see him in the dark there, only the God whose will it was, and whose will it often is that tears should bring us home to Him.

"I will arise, and go home to my father. I will cry, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and against thee.'"

And so he had. Not heavily, not wilfully, not wittingly, not a hundredth part so badly as that father had sinned against him. Yet it was wrong in him not to allow the old man to recover himself, but, forgetting a son's love-duty, so to leave him—hotly, hastily, with a proud defiance. Till now he had never felt, or at least confessed to himself, that wrong. Now, as generous natures do, he summed up sternly against himself, leniently against others. And then he asked, with yearning and bitter self-reproach, "Is the old man yet alive?"

* * *

The woods were still as rich and sweet, and the grass as soft as in May month; the windings of the pleasant dells were looped with shining waters; but she who used to love them so and brighten at their freshness, to follow the steps of each wandering breeze, and call to the sun as a flower does—now she came through her favourite places, and hardly cared to look at them. Only three short months ago she had returned to her woodland home, and the folk that knew and loved her, in the highest and brightest spirits of youth, conscious beauty, and hopefulness. All her old

friends were rejoicing in her, and she in their joy delighted, when her father thought it his sorrowful duty, in this world of sorrow, to tell her the bad news about her ever unlucky Cradock. At first she received it with scorn—as the high manner of her mind was—utter unbelief, because God could not have done it. Being simple, and very young, she had half as much faith in her heavenly Father as she had in the earthly and fallible parent, neither was she quite aware that we do not buy, but accept from God.

But, as week upon back of week, and month after tardy month, went by, Amy's faith began to wane, and herself to languish. She watched the arrival of every mail from the Cape, from India, from anywhere; her heart leaped up as each steamer came in, and sank at each empty letter-bag. Meanwhile her father was growing very unhappy about her, and so was good Aunt Doxy. At first John had said, when she took it so calmly, "Thank God! How glad I am! But her mother cared for me more than that." Like many another loving father, he had studied, but never learned his child.

Now it was the fifth day of October, the weather bright and beautiful, the English earth and trees and herbage trying back for the summer of which they had been so cheated. Poor pale Amy asked leave to go out. She had long been under Rue Hutton's care, not professionally, but paternally (for Rufus would have his own way when he was truly fond of any one), and she asked so quietly, so submissively, without a bit of joke about it, that when she was gone her father set to and shook his head, till a heavy tear came and blotted out a reference which had taken all the morning. As for Aunt Doxy, she turned aside, and took off her spectacles quickly, because the optician had told her to keep them perfectly dry.

Where the footpath wanders to and fro, preferring pleasure to duty, and meeting all remonstrance by quoting the course of the brook, Amy Rosedew slowly walked, or heavily stopped every

now and then, caring for nothing around her. She had made up her mind to cry no more, only to long for the time and place when and where no crying is. Perhaps in a year or so, if she lived, she might be able to see things again, and attend to her work as usual. Till then she would try to please her father, and keep up her spirits for his sake. Every one had been so kind to her, especially dear Eoa, who had really cried quite steadily ; and the least thing that girl Amy could do was to try and deserve it. Thinking thus, and doing her best to feel as well as think it, yet growing tired already, she sat down in a chair as soft as weary mortal may rest in. A noble beech, with a head of glory overlooking the forest, had not neglected to slipper his feet with the richest of nature's velvet. From the dove-coloured column's base, two yards above the ground-spread, drifts of darker bulk began, gnarled crooks of grapple, clutching wide at mother earth, deeply fanged into her breast, sureties against every wind. Ridged and ramped with many a hummock, rift, and twisted sinew, forth these mighty tendons stretched, some fathoms from the bole itself. Betwixt them nestled, all in moss, corniced with the golden, and cushioned with the greenest, nooks of cool, delicious rest, wherein to forget the world, and dream upon the breezes. "As You Like It," in your lap, Theocritus tossed over the elbow, because he is too foreign,—what sweet depth of enjoyment for a hard-working man who has earned it !

But, in spite of all this voluptuousness, the "moss more soft than slumber," and the rippling leafy murmur, there is little doubt that Miss Amy Rosedew managed to have another cry ere ever she fell asleep. To cry among those arms of moss, fleecing, tufting, pillowng, an absorbent even for Niobe ! Can the worn-out human nature find no comfort in the vegetable, though it does in the mineral, kingdom ?

Back, and back, and further back into the old relapse of sleep, the falling thither whence we came, the interest on

the debt of death. Yet as the old Stagirite hints, some of day's emotions filter through the strain of sleep ; it is not true that good and bad are, for half of life, the same. Alike their wits go roving haply after the true Owner, but some may find Him, others fail—Father, who shall limit thus Thine infinite amnesty ?

It would not be an easy thing to find a fairer sight. Her white arms on the twisted plumage of the deep green moss, the snowy arch of her neck revealed as the clustering hair fell from it, and the frank and playful forehead resting on the soft grey bark. She smiled in her sleep every now and then, for her pleasant young humour must have its own way when the schoolmaster, sorrow, was dozing ; and then the sad dreaming of trouble returned, and the hands were put up to pray, and the red lips opened, whispering, "Come home ! Only come to Amy !"

And then, in her dream, he *was* come —raining tears upon her cheek, holding her from all the world, fearing to thank God yet. She was smiling up at him : oh it was so delicious ! Suddenly she opened her eyes. What made her face so wet ? Why, Wena !

Wena, as sure as dogs are dogs ; mounted on the mossy arm, lick-lick-licking, mewing like a cat almost, even offering taste of her tongue, while every bit of the Wena dog shook with ecstatic rapture.

"Oh, Wena, Wena ! what are you come to tell me, Wena ? Oh, that you could speak ! "

Wena immediately proved that she could. She galloped round Amy, barking and yelling, until the great wood echoed again ; the rabbits, a mile away, pricked their ears, and the yaffingales stopped from tapping. Then off set the little dog down the footpath. Oh, could it be to fetch somebody ?

The mere idea of such a thing made Amy shake so, and feel so odd, she was forced to put one hand against the tree, and the other upon her heart. She could not look, she was in such a state ; she could not look down the footpath.

It seemed, at least, a century, and it may have been half a minute, before she heard through the bushes a voice—tush, she means *the voice*.

"Wena, you bad dog, come in to heel. Is this all you have learned by travelling?"

But Wena broke fence and everything, set off full gallop again to Amy, tugged at her dress, and retrieved her.

What happened after that Amy knows not, neither knows Cradock Nowell. So anything I could tell would be a fond thing vainly invented. All they remember is—looking back upon it, as both of them may, to the zenith of their lives—that neither of them could say a word except "darling, darling, darling!" all pronounced as superlatives, with "my own," once or twice between, and an exclusive sense of ownership, illiberal and unphilosophical. What business have we with such minor details? Who has sworn us accountants of kisses? All we have any right to say is, that after a long spell of inarticulate tautology, Amy looked up when Cradock proposed to add another cipher; very gravely, indeed, she looked up; except in the deepest depth of her eyes.

"Oh no, Cradock. You must not think of it. Seriously now, you must not, love."

"Why? I should like to know, indeed! After all the time I have been away!"

"I have so little presence of mind. I forgot to tell you in time, dear. Why, because Wena *has licked my face all over*, darling. Darling, yes, she *has*, I say. You are too bad not to care about it. Now come to my own best father, dear. Offer your arm like a gentleman."

So they—as Milton concisely says. Homer would have written "they two." How sadly our language wants a dual! We, the domestic race, have we rejected it because the use would have seemed a truism?

* * * *

That same afternoon Bull Garnet lay dying, calmly and peacefully going off, taking his accounts to a larger world.

He knew that there were some heavy items underscored against him: but he also knew that the mercy of God can even outdo the hope He gives us for token and for keepsake. A greater and a grander end, after a life of mark and power, might, to his early aspirations and self-conscious strength, have seemed the bourne intended. If it had befallen him—as but for himself it would have done—to appear where men are moved by passion, vigour, and bold decision, his name would have been historical, and better known to the devil. As it was, he lay there dying, and was well content. The turbulence of life was past, the torrent and the eddy, the attempt at fore-reaching upon his age, and sense of impossibility, the strain of his mental muscles to stir the great dead trunks of "orthodoxy," and then the self-doubt, the chill, the depression, which follow such attempts, as surely asague tracks the pioneer.

Thank God, all this was over now, and the violence gone, and the dark despair. Of all the good and evil things which so had branded him distinct, two yet dwelled in his feeble heart, only two still showed their presence in his dying eyes. Each of those two was good, if two indeed they were—faith in the heavenly Father, and love of the earthly children.

Pearl was sitting on a white chair at the side of the bed away from the window, with one hand in his failing palm, and the other trying now and then to enable her eyes to see things. She was thinking, poor little thing, of what she should do without him, and how he had been a good father to her, though she never could understand him. That was her own fault, no doubt. She had always fancied that he loved her as a bit of his property, as a thing to be managed; now she knew that it was not so; and he was going away for ever, and who would love or manage her? And the fault of all this was her own.

Rufus Hutton had been there lately, trying still to keep up some little show of comfort, and a large one of encourage-

ment; for he was not the man to say die till a patient came to the preterite. Throughout the whole, and knowing all, he had behaved in the noblest manner, partly from his own quick kindness, partly from that protective and fiduciary feeling which springs self-sown in the hearts of women when showers of sorrow descend, and crops up in the manly bosom at the fee of golden sunshine. Not that he took any fees; but that his professional habits revived, with a generosity added, because he knew that he would take nothing though all were in his power. Suddenly Mr. Pell came in, our old friend Octavius, sent for in an urgent manner, and looking as a man looks who feels but cannot open on the hinge of his existence. Like a thorough gentleman, he had been shy of the cottage, although aware of their distress; eager at once and reluctant, partly because it stood not in his but his rector's parish, partly for deeper reasons.

Though Pell came in so quietly, Bull Garnet rose at his entry, or tried to rise on the pillow, swept his daughter back by a little motion of his thumb, which she quite understood, and cast his eyes on the parson's with a languid yet strong intelligence. He had made up his mind that the man was good, and yet he could not help probing him.

The last characteristic act of poor Bull Garnet's life, a life which had been all character, all difference from other people.

"Will you take my daughter's hand, Pell?"

"Only too gladly," answered Pell; but she shrank away, and sobbed at him.

"Pearl, come forward this moment. It is no time for shilly-shallying."

The poor thing timidly gave her hand, standing a long way back from Pell, and with her large eyes streaming, yet fixed upon her father, and no chance at all of wiping them.

"Now, Pell, do you love my daughter? I am dying, and I ask you."

"That I do, with all my heart," said Pell, like a downright Englishman. "I shall never love any other."

No. 82.—VOL. XIV.

"Now, Pearl, do you love Mr. Pell?" Her father's eyes were upon her in a way that commanded truth. She remembered how she had told a lie, at the age of seven or eight, and that gaze had forced it out of her, and she had never dared to tell one since, until no lie dared come near her.

"Father, I like him very much. Very soon I should love him, if—if he loved me."

"Now, Pell, you hear that?"

"Beyond all doubt I do," said Octave, whose dryness never deserted him in the heaviest rain of tears; "and it is the very best thing for me I have heard in all my life."

Bull Garnet looked from one to the other, with the rally of his life come hot, and a depth of joyful sadness. Yet must he go a little further, because he had always been a tyrant till people understood him.

"Do you want to know how much money, sir, I intend to leave her, when I die to-night or to-morrow morning?"

Cut-and-dry Pell was taken aback. A thoroughly upright and noble fellow, but of a wholly different and less rugged road of thought. Meanwhile Pearl had slipped away; it was more than she could bear, and she was so sorry for Octavius. Then Pell up and spake bravely—

"Sir, I would be loth to think of you, my dear one's father, as anything but a gentleman; a strange one, perhaps, but a true one. And so I trust you have only put such a question to me in irony."

"Pell, there is good stuff in you. I know a man by this time. What would you think of finding your dear one's father a murderer?"

Octavius Pell was not altogether used to this sort of thing. He turned away with some doubt whether Pearl would be a desirable mother of children (for he, after all, was a practical man), and hereditary insanity— Then he turned back, remembering that all mankind are mad. Meanwhile Bull Garnet watched him, with extraordinary wrinkles, and a savage sort of pleasure.

He felt himself outside the world, and looking at the stitches of it. But he would not say a word. He had always been a bully, and he meant to keep it up.

"Sir," said Octave Pell, at last, "you are the very oddest man I ever saw in all my life."

"Ah, you think so, do you, Pell? Possibly you are right; possibly you are right, Pell. I have no time to think about it. It never struck me in that light. If I am so very odd, perhaps you would rather not have my daughter."

"If you intend to refuse her to me, you had better say so at once, sir. I don't understand all this."

"I wish you to understand nothing at all beyond the simple fact. I shot Clayton Nowell, and did it on purpose, because I found him insulting her."

"Good God! You don't mean to say it?"

"I never yet said a thing, Pell, which I did not mean to say."

"You did it in haste? You have repented? For God's sake, tell me that."

"Treat this as a question of business. Look at the deed and nothing else. Do you still wish to marry my daughter?"

Pell turned away from the great wild eyes now solemnly fixed upon him. His manly heart was full of wonder, anguish, and giddy turbulence. The promptest of us cannot always "come to time," like a prizefighter.

Pearl came in, with her chest well forward, and then drew back very suddenly. She thought her fate must be settled now, and would like to know how they had settled it. Then, like a genuine English lady, she gave a short sigh and went away. Pride makes the difference between us and all other nations.

But the dignified glance she had cast on Pell settled his fate and hers for life. He saw her noble self-respect, her steady reservation, her deep sense of her own pure value (which never would assert itself), and her passing contempt of his hesitation.

"At all risks I will have her," he

said to himself, for his manly strength gloried in her strong womanhood; "if she can be won I will have her. Oh, how I am degrading her! What a fool-bound fellow I am!"

Then he spoke to her father, who had fallen back, and was faintly gazing, wondering what the stoppage was.

"Sir, I am not worthy of her. God knows how I love her. She is too good for me."

Bull Garnet gathered his fleeting life, and looked at Pell with a love so deep that it banished admiration. Then his failing heart supplied, for the last, last time of all, the woe-worn fountain of his eyes. Strong and violent as he was, a little thing had often touched him to the turn of tears. What impulse is there but has this end? Even comic laughter.

Pell lifted from the counterpane the broad but shrunken hand, which was on the way to be offered to him, until sad memory stopped it. Then he looked down at the poor gray face, where the forehead, from the fall of the rest, appeared almost a monstrosity, and the waning of strong emotions left a quivering of hollowness. The young parson looked down with noble pity. Much he knew of his father-in-law! Bull Garnet would never be pitied. He drew his hand back with a little jerk, and placed it against his broad, square chin.

"I can't bear to die like this, Pell. I wish to God you could shave me."

Pell went suddenly down on his knees, put his strong brown hands up, and said nothing except the Lord's Prayer. Bull Garnet tried to raise his palms, but the power of his wrists was gone, and so he let them fall together. Then at every grand petition he nodded at the ceiling, as if he saw it going upward, and thought of the lath and plaster.

He had said he should die at four o'clock, for the paroxysms of heart-complaint returned at measured intervals, and he felt that he could not outlast another. So with his usual mastery and economy of labour, he had

sent a man to get the keys and begin to toll the great church bell, as soon as ever the clock struck four. "Not too long apart," he said; "steadily, and be done with it." When the boom of the sluggish bell came in at the open window, Bull Garnet smiled, because the man was doing it as he had ordered him.

"Right," he whispered; "yes, quite right. I have always been before my time. Just let me see my children." And then he had no more pain.

* * * *

Amy came in very softly, to know if he was dead. They had told her she ought to leave it alone, but she could not see it so. Knowing all and feeling all, she felt beyond her knowledge. If it would, oh, if it would help him with a spark of hope in his parting, help him in the judgment-day, to have the glad forgiveness of the brother with the deeper wrong—there it was, and he was welcome.

A little whispering went on, pale lips into trembling ears, and then Cradock, with his shoes off, was brought to the side of the bed.

"He won't know you," Pearl sobbed softly; "but how kind of you to come!" She was surprised at nothing now.

Her father raised his languid eyes, until they met Cradock's eager ones; there they dwelt with doubt, and wonder, and a slow rejoicing, and a last attempt at expression.

John Rosedew took the wan stiffening hand, lying on the sheet like a cast-off glove, and placed it in Cradock's sun-burnt palm.

"He knows all," the parson whispered, "he has read the letter you left for him; and, knowing all, he forgives you."

"That I do, with all my heart" Cradock answered firmly. "May God forgive me as I do you. Wholly, purely, for once and for all!"

"Kind—noble—Godlike—" the dying man said very slowly, but with his old decision.

Bull Garnet could not speak again. The great expansion of heart had been

too much for its weakness. Only now and then he looked at Cradock with his Amy, and every look was a prayer for them, and perhaps a recorded blessing.

Then they slipped away, in tears, and left him, as he ought to be, with his children only. And the telegraph of death was that God would never part them.

Now, think you not this man was dying a great deal better than he deserved? No doubt he was. And, for that matter, so perhaps do most of us. But does our Father think so?

CHAPTER LXI.

SOFTLY and quietly fell the mould on the coffin of Bull Garnet. A great tree overhung his sleep, without fear of the woodman. Clayton Nowell's simple grave, turfed and very tidy, was only a few yards away. That ancient tree spread forth its arms on this one and the other, as a grandsire lays his hands peacefully and placidly on children who have quarrelled.

A lovely spot, as one might see, for violence to rest in, for long remorse to lose the track, and deep repentance hopefully to abide the time of God. To feel the soft mantle of winter return, and the promising gladness of spring, the massive depths of the summer-tide, and the bright disarray of autumn. And to be, no more the while, oppressed, or grieved, or overworked.

There shall forest-children come, joining hands in pleasant fear, and, sitting upon grassy mounds, wonder who inhabits them, wonder who and what it is that cannot wonder any more. And haply they shall tell this tale—become a legend then—when he who writes, and ye who read, are dust.

Ay, and tell it better far, more simply, and more sweetly, never having gone astray from the inborn sympathy. For every grown-up man is apt to mar the uses of his pen with bitter words, and snarl, and twaddling; conceiting himself to be keen in the first, just in the second, and sage in the third. For all of these

let him crave forgiveness of God, his fellow-creatures, and himself, respectively.

Sir Cradock Nowell, still alive to the normal sense of duty, tottered away on John Rosedew's arm, from the grave of his half-brother. He had never learned whose hand it was that dug the grave near by, and no one ever forced that unhappy knowledge on him. This last blow, which seemed to strike his chiefest prop from under him, had left its weal on his failing mind in great marks of astonishment. That such a strong, great man should drop, and he, the elder and the weaker, be left to do without him ! He was going to the rectory now, to have a glass of wine, after fatigue of the funeral, a vintage very choice and rare, according to Mr. Rosedew, and newly imported from Oxford. And truly that was its origin. It might have claimed "founder's kin fellowship," like most of the Oxford wine-skins.

"Wonderful, wonderful man !" said poor Sir Cradock, doing his best to keep his back very upright, from a sudden suffusion of memory,—"to think that he should go first, John ! Oh, if I had a son left, he should take that man for his model."

"Scarcely that," John Rosedew thought, knowing all the circumstances ; "but of the dead I will say no harm."

"So quick, so ready, so up for anything ! Ah, I remember he knocked a man down just at the corner by this gate here, where the dandelion-seed is. And afterwards he proved how richly he deserved it. That is the way to do things, John."

"I am not quite sure of that," said the conscientious parson : "it might be wiser to prove that first ; and then to abstain from doing it. I remember an instance in point—"

"Of course you do. You always do, John, and I wish you wouldn't. But that has nothing to do with it. You are always cutting me short, John ; and worse than ever since you came back, and they talked of you so at Oxford. I hope they have not changed you, John."

He looked at the white-haired rector, with an old man's jealousy. Who else had any right to him ?

"My dear old friend," replied John Rosedew, with kind sorrow in his eyes, "I never meant to cut you short. I will try not to do it again. But I know I am rude sometimes, and I am always sorry afterwards."

"Nonsense, John ; don't talk of it. I understand you by this time ; and we allow for one another. But now about my son, my poor unlucky boy."

"To be sure, yes," said the other old man, not wishing to hurry matters. And so they stopped and probed the hedge instead of one another.

"I don't know how it is," at last Sir Cradock Nowell said, being rather aggrieved with John Rosedew for not breaking ground upon him—"but how hard those stubs of ash are ! Look at that splinter, almost severed by a man who does not know how to splash ; Jem, his name is, poor Garnet told me, Jem—something or other—and yet all I can do with my stick won't fetch it away from the stock."

"Like a child who will not quit his father, however his father has treated him."

"What do you mean by that, John ? Are you driving at me again ? I thought you had given it over."

"I never give over anything," John answered, in a manner for him quite melodramatic, and beyond his usual key.

"No. We always knew how stubborn you were. And now you are worse than ever."

"No fool like an old fool," John Rosedew answered, smiling sweetly, yet with some regret. "Cradock, I am such a fool I shall let out everything."

"What do you mean ?" asked Sir Cradock Nowell, leaning heavily on his staff, and setting his white face rigidly, yet with every line of it ready to melt ; "John, I have heard strange rumours, or I have dreamed strange dreams. In the name of God, what is it, John ? My son !—my only son—"

He could say no more, but turned away, and bowed his head, and trembled.

"Your only son, your innocent son, has been at my house these three days ; and when you like, you can see him."

"When I like—ah, to be sure ! I don't like many people. I am getting very old, John. And no one to come after me. It seems a pity, don't you think, and every one against me so ?"

"You can take your own part still, my friend. And you have to take your son's part."

"Yes, to be sure, my son's part. Perhaps he will come back some day. And I know he did not do it, now ; and I was very hard to him—don't you think I was, John?—very hard to my poor Craddy, and he was so like his mother!"

"But you will be very kind to him now ; and he will be such a comfort to you, now he is come back again, and going away no more."

"I declare you make me shake, John. You do talk such nonsense. One would think you knew all about him,—more than his own father does. What have I done, to be kept like this in the dark, all in the dark ? And you seem to think that I was hard to him."

"Cradock, all you have to do is just to say the word ; just to say that you wish to see him, and your son will come and talk to you."

"Talk to me ! Oh yes, I should like to talk to him—very much—I mean of course, if he is at leisure."

He leaned on his stick, and tried to think, while John Rosedew hurried off ; and of all his thoughts the leading one was, "What will Cradock my boy be like, and what shall I give him for dinner ?"

Cradock came up shyly, gently, looking at his father first, then waiting to be looked at. The old man fixed his eyes upon him, at first with some astonishment—for his taste in dress was somewhat outraged by the Broadway style—then, in spite of all the change, remembrance of his son returned, and love, and sense of ownership. Last of all, auctorial pride in the young man's width of shoulder, blended with soft recollections of the time he dandled him.

"Why, Cradock ! It is my poor son Cradock ! What a size you are grown, my boy, my boy ! "

"Oh, father, I am sure you want me. Only try me once again. I am not at all a radical."

"Crad, you never could be. I knew you must come round at last to my way of thinking. When you had seen the world, Crad ; when you had seen the world a bit, as your father did before you."

And so they made the matter up, in politics, and dress, and little touches of religion, and in the depth of kindred love which underlies the latter ; and never after was there word, except of migrant petulance, between the crotchety old man and the son who held his heart's key.

All this while we have been loth to turn to Mrs. Corklemore, and contemplate her discomfiture, although in strict sequence of events we ought to have done so long ago. But it is so very painful—and now-a-days all writers agree with Epicurus, in regarding pain as the worst of evils—so bitter is the task to describe a lovely mother failing, in spite of all exertion, to do her duty by her child, in robbing other people, that really—ah, well-a-day, physic must be taken.

At the time of her dismissal from the halls of Nowelhurst, Mr. Corklemore had been so glad to see his pretty wife again, and that queer little Flore, who amused him so by pinching his stiff leg, and crying "haw," and he had found the house so desolate, and the absence of plague so unwholesome, and the responsibility of having a will of his own so horrible, that he scarcely cared to ask the reason why they were come home. And Georgie—who was not thoroughly heartless, else how could she have got on so ?—thought Coo Nest very snug and nice, and none to contradict her. So she found relief awhile, in banishing her worse, while she indulged her better half.

Let me do the same by suppressing here that evil tendency to moralise. In Georgie's case, as well as mine, the

indulgence possessed at any rate the attractions of change and variety. But, knowing how strictly we are bound by the canons of philosophy to suspect and put the curb on every natural bias, that good young woman soon refrained from over-active encouragement of her inclination to goodness. Rallying her sense of right, she vanquished very nobly all the seductions of honesty, and, by a virtuous effort, marched from the Capua of virtue.

She stood upon the wood-crowned heights which looked upon Coo Nest, and as the smoke came curling up, the house seemed very small to her. What a thing to call a garden! And the pigeon-house at Nowelhurst was nearly as large as our stable! And oh that little viney, where one knew every single bunch, and came every day to watch its ripening, and the little fuss of its colouring, like an ogre watching a pet babe roasting. Surely nature never meant her to live upon so small a scale; or why had she been gifted with such large activities?

She turned her back upon Coo Nest, and her face to Nowelhurst Hall, and in her mind's eye saw a place ever so much larger.

Then a pleasant sound came up the hollow, a nice ring of revolving wheels coqueting with the best C springs and all the new improvements. Well-mettled horses, too, were there, stepping together sonipedally, and a footman could be seen, whose legs must stand him in 60*l.* a year.

"That odious old Sir Julius Wallop and his wizen-faced wife come to patronize us again and say, 'Ha, Corklemore, snug little place, charming situation; but I think I should pull it down and rebuild; no room for Chang to stand in it. And how is my old friend, Sir Cradock, your forty-fifth cousin, I believe? Ah, he *has* a nice place.' I haven't the heart to meet them now, and their patronising dispragament. Heigho! It is a nice turn-out. And yet they have at Nowelhurst three more handsome carriages. And it does look so much better to have two footmen there

behind, and I do like watered linings so. How nice Flo did look by my side in that new barouche! Oh, my darling child, I must not give way to selfish feelings. I must do my duty towards you."

Therefore she proceeded, against her better nature, in the face of prudence, with her attempt to set aside poor Sir Cradock Nowell, and obtain fiduciary possession of his property. Cradock was lost in the *Taprobane*—of that there could be no doubt; and so she was saved all further trouble of laying before the civil authorities the stronger evidence they required before issuing a warrant. But all was going very nicely towards the commencement of an inquiry as to the old man's state of mind. Then suddenly she was checkmated, and never moved a pawn again.

One afternoon, Mrs. Corklemore was sitting in her drawing-room, expecting certain visitors, quite ready to be bored with them, because they were leading gossips, ladies who gave the first complexion to any nascent narrative. And Georgie knew how to handle them. In the county talk which must ensue, only let them take her side, and all the world would feel for her in her very painful position.

After a rumble of rapid wheels, and a violent pull at the bell, which made the lady of the house to jump, because they had just had the bell-hanger, into her sanctuary came with a cooler than cucumine temperature, not indeed Lady Alberta Smith and her daughter Victoria Beatrice, but Eoa Nowell and her cousin Cradock.

For once in her life Mrs. Corklemore was deprived of all power of mind, ghostly horror being added to bodily fear of Eoa. She fain would have fled, but her limbs gave way, and she fell back into a soft French chair, and covered her face with both hands. Then Eoa, looking tall and delicate in her simple mourning dress, walked up to her very quietly, leading Cradock as if she were proud of him.

"I have taken the liberty, Mrs. Corklemore, of bringing my cousin Cradock to see you, because it may save trouble."

"I trust you will forgive," said Cradock, "our very sudden invasion. We are come upon a matter of business, to save unpleasant exposures and disgrace to our distant relatives."

"Oh," gasped poor Mrs. Corklemore, "you are alive, then, after all? It was proved that you had lost your life upon the coast of Africa."

"Yes, but it has proved otherwise," Cradock answered, bowing neatly.

"And it would have been so much better, under the sad, sad circumstances, for all people of good feeling, and all interested in the family."

"For the latter perhaps it would, madam; but not so clearly for the former. I am here to protect my father from all machinations."

"Leave her to me," cried Eoa, slipping prettily in front of him, "I understand her best, because—because of my former vocation. And I think she knows what I am."

"That I do," answered Georgie, cleverly interposing first a small enamelled table; "not only an insolent, but an utterly reckless creature."

"You may think so," Eoa replied, with calm superiority; "but that only shows your piteous ignorance of the effects of discipline. I am now so sedate and tranquil a woman, that I do not hate, but scorn you." Cradock could not help smiling at this, knowing what Eoa was.

"We want no strong expressions, my dear, on one side or the other," for he saw that a word would have overthrown Eoa's new-born discipline; "Mrs. Corklemore is far too clever not to perceive her mistake. She knows quite well that any inquiry as to my dear father's state of mind can now be of no use to her. And if she thinks of any further proceedings against myself, perhaps she had better first look at just this—just this document." He laid before her a certificate, granted by three magistrates, that indisputable evidence had been brought before them as to the cause and manner of Clayton Nowell's death, and that Cradock Nowell had no share in it, wittingly or unwittingly.

That was the upshot of it; but of course it extended to about fifty-fold the length.

Mrs. Corklemore bent over, in her most bewitching manner, and perused it very leisurely, as if she were examining Flore's attempts at pothooks. Meanwhile, with a side-glint of her eyes, she was watching both of them; and it did not escape her notice that Eoa was very pale.

"To be sure," she said at last, looking full at the Eastern maid, "I see exactly how it was. I have thought so all along. A female Thug must be charmed, of course, by the only son of a murderer. My dear, I do so congratulate you."

"Thank you," answered Eoa, and the deep gaze of her lustrous eyes made the clever woman feel a world unopened to her; "I thank you, Georgie Corklemore, because you know no better. My only wish for you is, that you may never know unhappiness, because you could not bear it."

Saying so, she turned away, and, with her light, quick step, was gone, before her enemy could see a symptom of the welling tears which then burst all control. But Cradock, who had known such grief as hers was but a joke to, stayed to say a few soft words, and made a friend for evermore of the woman who had plotted so against his life and all his love.

Madame la Comtesse since that time has seen much tribulation, and is all the better for it. Mr. Corklemore died of the gout, and the angel Flore of the measles; and she herself, having nursed them both, and lost some selfishness in their graves, is now (as her destiny seemed to be) the wife of Mr. Chope. Of course she is compelled to merge her strong will in a stronger one, and, according to nature's Salique law, is the happier for doing so. Whether this union will produce a subject for biography to some unborn Lord Campbell, time alone can show.

From the above it will be clear that poor Eoa Nowell was now acquainted with the secret of the Garnet family. Bob himself had told her all, about a month after his father's death, re-

nouncing at the same time all his claims upon her. Of that Eoa would not hear; only at his urgency she promised to consult her friends, and take a week to think of it. And this was the way she kept her promise.

First she ran up to Cradock Nowell, with the bright tears still upon her cheeks, and asked him whether he had truly and purely forgiven his injurer. He took her hand, and answered her with his eyes, in which the deepened springs of long affliction glistened, fixed steadily upon hers.

"As truly and purely as I hope to be forgiven at the judgment-day."

"Then that settles that matter. Now order the dog-cart, Cradddy dear, and drive me to Dr. Hutton's."

Of course he obeyed her immediately, and in an hour they entered the gate of Geopharmacy Lodge. Rosa was amazed at her beauty, and thought very little, after that, of Mrs. Corklemore's appearance.

"For my part," said Rufus Hutton, when Rosa had laid the case before him in a privy council, "although it is very good of you, and very flattering to me, that you look upon me still as your guardian, I think you are bound first of all to consult Sir Cradock Nowell."

"How very odd! Now that is exactly what I do not mean to do. He never can understand, poor dear, and I hope he never will, the truth about poor Clayton's death. His present conviction is, like that of all the neighbourhood, that Black Will the poacher did it, the man who has since been killed in a fight with Sir Julius Wallop's game-keepers. And it would shock poor uncle so; I am sure he would never get over it if the truth were forced upon him. And if it were, I am sure he would never allow me to have my way, which, of course, I should do in spite of him. And I am not his heiress now, since Cradock came to life again. But I have plenty of money of my own; and I have quite settled what to give him the day that I am married, and you too, my dear guardy, if you behave well about this. Look here!"

She drew forth a purse quite full of gold, and tossed it in her old Indian style, so that Rufus could not help laughing.

"Well, my dear," he answered kindly, "who could resist such bribery? Besides, I see that your mind is made up, and we all know what the result of that is. And after all, the chief question is, what effect will your knowledge of this have on your love for your husband?"

"It will only make me love him more, ever so much more, because of his misfortune."

"And will you never allude to it, never let him see that you think of it, so as to spoil his happiness?"

"Is it likely I should think of it? Why, my father must have killed fifty men. He was desperate in a battle. And Bob has never brought that up against me."

"Well, if you take it in that light—decidedly not an English light—"

"And perhaps you never heard that Bob's father, by his quickness and boldness, saved the lives of fifteen men in a colliery explosion before he ever came to Nowelhurst, and therefore he had a perfect right to—to—"

"Take the lives of fifteen others. Fourteen to his credit still. Well, Eoa, you can argue, if any female in the world can. Only in one thing, my dear child, be advised by me. If you must marry Robert Garnet, leave this country for awhile, and take his sister Pearl with you."

"Of course I must marry Bob," said Eoa; "and of course I should go away with him. But as to taking Pearl with us, why, that's a thing to be thought about."

However, they got over that, as well as all other difficulties; Sir Cradock Nowell was at the wedding, Mr. Rose-dew performed the ceremony, and Rufus Hutton gave away as lovely a bride as ever was seen. Bob Garnet spied a purple emperor, who had lost his way, knocking his head in true imperial fashion against the chancel-window, and he glanced at Eoa about it, between the two "I wills," and she lifted her beau-

tiful eyebrows, and he saw that she meant to catch him. So, after signing the register, they contrived to haul him down, without letting John Rosedew know it; then at the chancel-porch they let him go free of the forest, with his beautiful wings unsoiled. Not even an insect should have cause to repent their wedding-day.

And now they live in as fair a place as any the world can show, not far from Pezo da Ragoa, in the Alto Douro district. There Eoa's children toddle by the brilliant river's brink, and form their limbs to strength and beauty up the vine-clad mountain's side. Bob has invested his share of proceeds in a vine-yard of young Bastardo, and Muscat de Jesu; moreover, he holds a good appointment under the Royal Oporto Company, agricultural of the vine. Many a time Eoa sits watching with her deep bright eyes the purple flow of the luscious juice from the white marble "lagar," wherein the hardy peasants, with their drawers tied at the knee, tramp to the time of the violin to and fro, without turning round, among the pulpy flood. Then Bob, who has discovered a perfect cure for oïdium, and knows how to deal with every grub that bores into or nips the vine, to his wife and bairns he comes in haste, having been too long away, bringing a bunch of the ladies' fingers, or the Barrete de Clerigo, or it may be some magnificent insect new to his entomology; or, still more interesting prize, a letter from Pearl or Amy, wherein Mrs. Pell, or Nowell, gossips of the increasing cares which increase her happiness. Yet even among those lovely scenes, and under that delicious sky, frequent and fond are the glances cast by hope, as well as memory, at the bowered calm of the Forest brooks, and the brown glamour of the beechwood.

And when they return to dwell in the Forest, and to end their days there, even Bob will scarcely know the favourite haunts of his boyhood—to such an extent has Cradock Nowell planted and improved, clothing barren slopes with verdure, adding to the wealth of woods

many a new tint and tone by the aid of foreign trees unknown to his father. In doing so his real object is not so much to improve the estate, or gratify his own good taste, or even that of Amy; but to find labour for the hands, and food for the mouths, of industrious people. Sir Cradock grumbles just a little every now and then, because, like all of us Englishmen, he must have his grievance. But, on the whole, he is very proud of what his son is doing, and thoroughly enjoys his power of urging or repressing it.

And if on theoretic matters any question chances to arise between them, when one says "no" to the other's "yes" as all true Britons are bound to do—upon politics, port-wine, and parsons,—then a gentle spirit comes and turns it all to laughter, with the soft and pleasant wit of a well-bred woman's ignorance. For Amy still must have her say, and still asserts her privilege to flavour every dull discussion with lively words, and livelier glances, and a smile for both the disputants. Then Cradock looks at his dear young wife with notes of admiration, and bids her keep such piquant wisdom for the councils of the nursery. Upon which pleasant reminder, the old man chuckles as if some very good thing had been said; then craftily walks with a spotted toy, capable of barking and vaguely representing Caldo or Wena, whichever you please, to the foot of certain black oak-stairs, where he fully expects to hear the prattle of small Clayton.

To wit, it has been long resolved, and managed with prospective wisdom down the path of years, that the county annals shall not be baulked of a grand Sir Clayton Nowell. And a very grand fellow indeed he is, this two-year-old Clayton Nowell, grand in the stolid sageness of his broad and stedfast gaze, grand in the manner of his legs, and his Holbein attitude, grander still in stamping when his meat and ale are late, but grandest of all, immeasurably grand, in the eyes of his grandfather.

Hogstaff, whose memory is quite gone, and his hearing too of every sound

except the voice of this boy, identifies him beyond all cavil with the Clayton of our story. Many a time the bowed retainer chides his little master for not remembering the things he taught him only yesterday. Then Cradock smiles at his son's oblivion of the arts his uncle learned, but never reminds old Heggy that the yesterday was rather more than five-and-twenty years ago.

Is it true or is it false, according to the rules of art, that the winding-up of a long, long story, handled with more care than skill, should have some resemblance to the will of a kindly-natured man? In whose final dispositions, no dependant, however humble, none who have helped him in the many pages of his life, far less any intimate friend, seeks in vain a grateful mention or a token of regard.

Be that as it may, any writer who loves his work (although a fool for doing so) feels the end and finish of it like the signature of his will. And doubly saddened must he be, if the scenes which claimed him most, and cast upon him such a spell that he could not call spectators in,—if these, for want of skill, have wearied eyes and hearts he might have pleased.

For surely none would turn away, whose nature is uncancelled, if once he could be gently led into that world of beauty. To rest in the majesty of shade, forgetting weary headache; to let the little carking cares, avarice and jealousy, self-conceit and thirst of fame, fly away on the wild wood, like the piping of a bird; to hear the rustle of young leaves, when their edges come together, and dreamily to wonder at the size of things above us.

Shall ever any man enclasp the good that grows above him, or even offer to receive the spread of heaven's greatness? Yet every man may lift himself above the highest tree-tops, even to the throne of God, by loving and forgiving.

And verily, some friends of ours, who could not once forego a grudge, are being taught, by tare and trett, how much they owe their Maker, and how little to themselves. First of these is

Rufus Hutton, quite a jolly mortal, getting fat, and riding Polly for the sake of his liver and renes. And all he has to say is this: first, that he will match trees and babies with those of any nurseryman; next, that as I have a knack of puffing good people and good things, he begs for reciprocity on the part of superior readers. And if this should chance to meet the eye of any one who knows where to find a really first-rate Manilla, conducted on free-trade principles, such knowing person, by addressing, confidentially under seal, "R.H., Post Office, Ringwood," may hear of something very greatly to his own advantage.

Now do we, without appeal to the blue smoke of enthusiasm, know of anything to the advantage of anybody whatever? Yes, I think we do. We may highly commend the recent career of the Ducksacre firm, and Mr. Clinkers, and Issachar Jupp the bargee. Robert Clinkers and Polly his wife are driving a first-rate business in coal and coke and riddlings, not highly aristocratic perhaps, but free from all bad debts. You may see the name on a great brass-plate near the Broadway, Hammersmith, on the left-hand, where the buses stop. But Mr. Jupp flies at higher game. He has turned his length of wind, that once secured the palm of victory in physical encounters, to a higher and nobler use. In a word, Mr. Jupp is a Primitive Christian upon and beside the waters of Avon. There you may hear him preaching and singing through his nose alternately—ah, me, that is not what I mean—for either proceeding is nasal—every Sunday and Wednesday evening, when the leaks in the punt allow him. He gets five-and-thirty shillings a-week, as Sir Cradock's water-bailiff, and he has not stolen twig or catkin of all the trees he convoys down Avon. In seven or eight more summers, little Loo Jupp will probably be the prettiest girl in the forest. May we be there to see her!

The best and kindest man of all who have said their say in my story, and not thrust their merits forward, John Rose-

dew, still leads his quiet life, nearer and nearer to wisdom's threshold, nearer and nearer to the door of God. His temper is as soft and sweet, his memory as bright and ready, and his humour as playful, as when he was only thirty years old, and walked every day to Kidlington. As for his shyness, that we must never ask him to discard; because he likes to know us first, and then he likes to love us.

But of all the people in the world, next to his own child Amy, most he loves and most he honours his son-in-law Cradock Nowell.

Cradock Nowell, so enlarged and purified by affliction, so able now to understand and feel for every poor man. He, when placed in large possessions and broad English influence, never will forget the time of darkness, grief, and penury, never will look upon his brethren as under another God than his.

It is true that we must have hill and valley, towering oak and ragged robin,

zenith cloud overlooking the sun, and mist crouching down in the hollows. And true as well that we cannot see all the causes and needs of the difference. But is it not still more true and sure, that the whole is of one universal kingdom (bound together by one great love), the high and low, the rich and poor, the powerful and the helpless? And in the spreading of that realm, beyond the shores of time and space, when at last it is understood what the true aim of this life has been, not greatness, honour, wealth, or science, no, nor even wisdom—as we unwisely take it—but happiness here and hereafter, a flowing tide whose fountain is our love of one another—then shall we truly learn by feeling (whereby alone we can learn) that all the cleaving of our sorrow, and cuts into the heart of us, were nothing worse than preparation for the grafts of God.

THE END.

PROSPECTS OF WEATHER-SCIENCE.

BY J. NORMAN LOCKYER.

THE most popular book on physical geography or meteorology which we can take up will suffice to show us that we have already a very fair grip of the grosser phenomena presented by the fluid and aerial envelopes of our planet. We can, in imagination, plant ourselves in space, and see our little world begirt with bands, as we actually see our brother-planet, Jupiter; and we know that these bands, lying both north and south of a central one—a region of calms and rains—indicate first the trade winds, then the tropical calms, then the counter trades, and, last of all, at either pole, other regions where the winds have no prevailing direction. We know, moreover, that the calm belts are perpetually varying in breadth, and that the whole system, both north and south

of the equator, preserving their relative positions, follow the sun as in his annual rounds he is now north, now south, of that line. Here, then, we are in presence of the direct action of the all-pervading sun-force on a rotating earth. Were the earth still, of trade winds we should have none. Contrariwise Jupiter, the largest and most rapidly rotating of all the planets, is belted sometimes in a most extraordinary manner; whilst on Mars, a small and slowly rotating body, nothing of the kind has ever been observed, although it is fair to add, that other atmospheric conditions may have something to say to this.

So much for the sun's direct action, and one of its effects on our planet—the prevailing wind currents. These are set in motion by a part of the

230,000,000th part of the sun's radiation into space—the quantity of sun-force by which all the world's work is done, and which represents a power, motion—or mode of motion—heat, which would daily raise 7,513 cubic miles of water from the freezing to the boiling point.

We have also learnt to ascribe to the radiation from the earth, combined with the existence of aqueous vapours in our atmosphere, almost greater marvels—certainly more varied and complicated effects. As the violet clothes itself in its perfume, so does the earth clothe itself with aqueous vapour—the great cloud-mother; this, acted upon by the laws of compression and expansion—the effects being modified in a thousand ways by the terrestrial conformation, different electrical conditions, and possibly by the varying position of our satellite—does all the rest. The heat given out by a mass of vapour, sufficient to give a gallon of water when compressed first into cloud and then into hail or snow, is sufficient to raise 67,690 gallons of air from the temperature of melting ice to summer heat.¹ Again, a rainfall of one inch over Great Britain liberates as much heat as would be generated by the combustion of 350,000,000 tons of coal.

These may be taken as fair specimens of the sort of facts with which we are now familiar regarding the movements and changes of our atmosphere. But, with regard to both air and sea, we have Nature in her stormiest mood too often for our teacher; and wrecks and dead bodies round our shores speak but too often, trumpet-tongued, of the clash of the elements, while we, in our ignorance, can but look on with awe, our present knowledge being as powerless to render our sailors safe on every sea as it was to determine the longitude for some generations after the Copernican theory was given to the world.

A recently-published blue book, to which it is our object to draw attention, tells us how it has been attempted to fill up the gaps in our knowledge—to turn these "vague generalities" to profit-

¹ Maury's "Physical Geography," p. 38.

able account, especially in the saving of life among our seafaring population. It also contains some recommendations for the future carrying on of the work, which, if agreed to by Government, will make all scientific men very hopeful for the future progress of meteorology. In spite of all the millions of meteorological observations which have been accumulated up to the present time, it must be confessed that very little good has been got out of them, and for a reason inherent in the nature of meteorological inquiries, in which, more than in any other science, a complete correlation of the results obtained by all the workers is required to "crown the edifice," whereas the discovery of a new star or a new element is a result complete in itself.

Maury was the first to see this, and to him is due the entire credit of suggesting, and to a large extent carrying out, the only plan of attack from which any large amount of good can be anticipated. In 1852, with the sanction of the United States Government, he began, by the help of the navy and merchant ships of the United States, to collect observations made at sea in all parts of the world. A conference of the other maritime nations was held in Brussels in 1853, and in 1854 our own Government, in concert with the Royal Society, took steps to further the work. The Meteorological Department of the Board of Trade was established, and the late Admiral Fitzroy was placed at its head.

Means were at once adopted to fill up the gaps we have mentioned. Data were obtained on everything which concerned barometer, thermometer, hydrometer, winds, weather, currents, variations, soundings, crossings, passages, storms, ice, shooting stars and meteors, aurora, and electricity. For this purpose instruments were supplied to the ships of the royal navy, and lent to likely captains of merchant vessels. The earth was divided into squares of 10° each, numbered for purposes of reference, and these were again divided *ad libitum*, to suit the requirements of localities where greater detail became necessary. As many as

550,000 separate sets of observations, made under almost every star, have already been collected.

But this was not all. The meteorological pioneers on the Continent were getting restive at the prospect of long waiting, and were making attempts, by the aid of the telegraph and of their then knowledge, to give one branch of the inquiry at once a practical effect, by warning the sea-coasts against actual or potential storms. We all know how warmly Admiral Fitzroy threw himself into this branch of his work, and that the results have been the saving of many lives—and the loss of his own.

When this melancholy event happened it was determined to review the work already accomplished, to see if any alteration was desirable, either in the kind of work done or in the way in which it was done. A joint committee of the Royal Society, Board of Trade, and Admiralty was appointed, and the result is the blue book already referred to, which is at once critical and suggestive.

One of the main results of the criticism is, that our present knowledge is not sufficient to enable us to predict weather—that, in fact, there is no scientific basis on which to rest *daily forecasts*;—while, on the other hand, the storm signals have, as far at all events as they indicate the force of coming gales, been of great use, and are becoming more accurate. We learn that, to carry on the weather-predicting part of his work, Admiral Fitzroy felt himself compelled to allow the sea observations to fall considerably into arrear. But we need not dwell on this part of the Report, as our purpose is to show the extent and nature of the recommendations made in the blue book.

The fundamental recommendation is, that the scientific work should be transferred to Kew Observatory. We read:—

"The collection of observations from the captains of ships is a function which can probably best be performed through the medium of such agencies as a Government office can command. . . . The digesting and tabulating results of observations is on the other hand a

function which requires a large knowledge of what the state of the science for the time being requires, as well as exact scientific method. This function is one that has not been satisfactorily performed by the Meteorological Department. And we believe that it would be much better as well as more economically performed under the direction of a scientific body,—such as a Committee of the Royal Society or of the British Association, if furnished with the requisite funds by the Government,—than it will be if left to a Government department. The establishment already existing at Kew might probably be easily developed so as to carry into effect such a purpose. It would in that case become a meteorological centre to which all observations of value, whether made on land or at sea, and whether within the British Isles or not, would be sent for discussion and reduction. . . . All meteorological observations made on land, whether at the stations recommended by the Royal Society, or at the light-houses or coast-guard stations, as well as all observations at sea, shall be referred to and discussed under the direction of such a scientific body as we have mentioned."

Very fortunately, we have already, in Greenwich Observatory, an instance of the admirable working of such a system, the Board of Visitors being, we take it, the equivalent of the Committee by whom the work will be superintended, or rather controlled. That the work will be well done at Kew is beyond all question. That observatory already nobly leads the world in many cognate inquiries. All the magnetical observatories with which the world is beginning to be sprinkled are built upon the Kew model; and perhaps the best possible appeal to foreign governments would be to make Kew the normal meteorological observatory as well, for then an extension of the already existing magnetical observatories would be more than suggested.

That Kew should be our first meteorological observatory is part of the recommendations of the Committee. While

they acknowledge that Admiral Fitzroy was baffled in his attempts to foretell weather by our imperfect knowledge, they suggest a special inquiry into weather changes as a means of increasing it. The establishment in the British Isles of six stations, with self-recording instruments, was recommended by the Royal Society in 1865 ; and these stations of the first order — Kew, Falmouth, Stonyhurst, Armagh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen—will form the framework of a sort of meteorological triangulation, to be filled in by secondary stations *ad libitum* ; lighthouses, coast-guard-stations, packet-ships, and inland observatories, being called into play. In this way the progress of all kinds of weather across the British Isles and adjacent seas may be traced continuously, and exhibited in the form of weather-charts—a work already commenced for the European area by Le Verrier.

It is certain that, whenever this work is in operation, it will no longer be a question of the British Isles alone. The whole of Europe will follow ; and we shall thus have an enormous area over which we shall be able to study in detail the phenomena which on the sea we can only study *en gros*.

The Committee remark, towards the close of their report :—

" Considering the wide extension of civilization and of British colonization " and influence, it seems only reasonable that we should possess some regular record of the broad peculiarities " of all the great weather changes that " affect the globe. A knowledge of the " varying regions of exceptional drought, " of wet, of heat, or of cold, of the " deflection of normal currents of air or " of sea, of the variation in the limits

" of the polar ice, and of other phenomena, is required ; and for this purpose much more, of course, will be needed than either the ocean statistics, referring to constant values, or the weather changes in and near the British Isles, limited as they are in their local area, which form the special subjects of our recommendations. To obtain such a record, it will be less necessary to create new stations of observation than to utilize the scattered efforts that are now made in extraordinary abundance, by bringing them, as it were, to a focus. We look forward to the establishment at no distant period of a regular record of the weather changes over the greater portion of the globe, through international effort, and especially by means of the observations of British subjects on shore and afloat."

We trust that what has been said is sufficient to give an idea of the enormous boon to science which must follow from the carrying out of these recommendations in an efficient manner. When the 1,650,000 sea observations—the number estimated to be sufficient to fulfil the requirements of the Royal Society—have been made and discussed, and when the weather changes over the British or European area have been observed for some years, always in connexion with the sea observations (this point the Committee insist upon, as we have seen) our meteorological knowledge will be out of all comparison with what we have at present.

Surely a maritime nation like ours, which yearly spends 190,000*l.* on art, can well continue to afford some 10,000*l.* a year for the study of a science like meteorology.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE SALMO SALAR, ESQ.

CHAPTER I.

"I was born, or rather——" "Bless my heart!" said I, somewhat startled, "*who are you?* How did *you* get here?"

No wonder I was surprised. I had just quitted the Edinburgh station of the Caledonian Railway, and, with the accustomed selfish liberality of a young man, I had bribed the guard to lock me up in a compartment to myself, in spite of which I now found myself accosted, without preface or apology, by a queer-looking old gentleman, dressed in a straw-coloured paletot, with a short pipe in his mouth, sitting, with his legs tucked under him, on the opposite seat to mine, as much at his ease, apparently, as if he had as much right there as I, who had paid two-and-sixpence for the privilege of appropriating six seats to myself.

"Or rather——" he proceeded.

"I really must beg, sir," I began; but somehow his manner overawed me, as it were, into listening. I felt like the wedding-guest in the presence of the Ancient Mariner. He went on in the same tone, without noticing me, or even taking his pipe out of his mouth.

"Or rather, I struggled into existence, for the egg from which I sprang had lain, with countless others, for well-nigh four months previously in one of the tributary streams of the Upper Tweed. My life, if life it could be called, had hitherto been a dreamy, monotonous, uneventful one, a gleam of sunshine quickening my pulse and increasing the natural yearning I felt for release and liberty, a passing cloud or a chill wind driving me back to somnolency and partial oblivion. But now the garish beams of the late February sun had called me forth into a new world, and I felt myself, with a proud sense of independence, launched, free from trammels and control, upon that wild waste of waters, henceforth to comprise my habitation and my home.

"Queer little misshapen creature that I was! With head and eyes frightfully disproportioned to my size, a little tail, and almost invisible fins, my appearance presented to the unpractised eye rather than that of the tadpole, the progeny of the wide-mouthed waddling frog, than that of the noble salmon, the monarch of the waters.

"Still Nature, careful of her worthiest offspring, had not neglected the means of preservation during its helpless infancy. I found myself furnished, beneath my embryo fins, with a little sack of nutriment, which I felt would sustain me for many days, until my growing strength should enable me to seek the abundant food which the surrounding waters contained, and to escape the numerous enemies that sought to make a prey of me.

"I should say that, when I burst forth from the bed of gravel in which I had so long been buried, very many of my brethren accompanied me, and, as we eyed each other's grotesque forms with astonishment, not unmixed with admiration, we, one and all, urged by the promptings of nature, scuttled away and hid ourselves, each under some projecting pebble or stone, over which the waters rushed harmlessly, so far as we were concerned, and in which quiet haven, fed from the sack I have before mentioned, we lay safe, happy, and in full enjoyment of our new life, making observations on the, to us, wide world, which opened to our view."

CHAPTER II.

"LABOUR is the lot not only of man, but of birds, beasts, and fishes. We must all work for our living, and I for one have a natural inclination to swim against the stream, but I own to looking back to this period of my life as one of unmixed happiness. Fed without the trouble of seeking, or even opening my

mouth to swallow, my food—sheltered by an overhanging stone, and lulled by the pleasant ripple of the stream around me—I passed a dreamy, happy existence, without care, or thought, or trouble, and, as the sense of life quickened within me, it brought with it only a deeper sense of enjoyment. ‘Where ignorance is bliss, ’tis folly to be wise,’ and I may be thankful now that I remained so long in blissful ignorance of the dangers which surrounded me. The power of reflection was not given to me, and, although I saw numbers of my brothers and sisters daily destroyed before my eyes, it never occurred to me as possible that a similar fate might await me. My ignorance, however, was my protection; careless of what was passing around me, I lay under my stone, motionless and fearless, and thus escaped danger until nature had given me the means of avoiding it.

“When I look back on the number of our enemies, I can only wonder that even one out of our numerous progeny is left to tell the tale. Even the insect tribe was in arms against us; I have seen a huge water-beetle seize an embryo samlet by the throat, and carry it off to devour at his leisure. And the larva of sundry insects fed upon us whilst we were in the egg, or newly hatched. There was a little brown-coated bird¹ with a white waistcoat, the neatest, pleasantest-looking creature imaginable, who would walk² deliberately into the stream, and, setting at defiance all laws of gravity, peck away at marine insects, floating morsels of spawn, and I greatly fear, though I never actually witnessed the atrocity, little samlets like myself. There was a company of black-headed gulls,³ who, with loud laughing cry, perpetually hovered over the stream, and, though their professed object was to feed upon the March brown fly which, dead or alive, in countless myriads lined the shore, or covered the face of the waters, never let slip an opportunity of

snapping up some little brother or sister that had carelessly left its place of refuge. Then the kingfisher, with rufous breast and glorious mantle of blue, would dart down like a plummet from his roost, and seize unerringly any little truant which passed within his ken. The appetite of this bird was miraculous; I never saw him satisfied. He would sit for hours on a projecting bough, his body almost perpendicular, his head thrown back between his shoulders; eyeing with an abstracted air the heavens above or the rocks around him, he seemed intent only upon exhibiting the glorious lustre of his plumage, and the brilliant colours with which his azure back was shaded; but let a careless samlet stray beneath him, and in a twinkling his nonchalant attitude was abandoned. With a turn so quick that the eye could scarce follow it, his tail took the place of his head, and, falling rather than flying, he would seize his victim, toss him once into the air, catch him as he fell, and swallow him in a second. This manoeuvre he would repeat from morning till night; such a greedy insatiable little wretch I never saw! A huge, melancholy heron, too, would station herself knee-deep, near at hand. She was held in terrible awe by me in later days, but at this time I think she despised such ‘small deer’ as we were; I have seen her, though, kill a rat with a single stroke of her powerful beak, transfix a frog, or swallow an eel in spite of his writhings and struggles, and not unfrequently, to my infinite delight, kill, and carry off to her distant nest, those most hated and destructive foes to our race, our cousins the yellow and bull trout. Yes! our own blood relations are our direst foes, and I have witnessed the destruction, by a hungry old kelt, of fifty of his own progeny for breakfast.

I increased gradually in size; my form developed; the little sack I have alluded to was absorbed, and, with a new-born appetite, I felt was given the power of supplying it. I began to make excursions from my place of refuge, seizing with avidity the minute insects which

¹ The Water Ouzel—*Cinclus Aquaticus*.

² Waterton doubts this, but I have seen the operation times and oft.

³ The Laughing Gull—*Larus Ridibundus*.

swarmed in the waters around me, and even rising at times to the surface and seizing some unconscious midge-fly or pre-occupied gnat, that had alighted to drop her eggs on the water. If danger arose, we (for in these excursions I was joined by numberless fry of my own standing) at once rushed for shelter beneath the stones, or sought it in the shallows where our enemies, the great trout, could not follow us. I remember on one occasion, though it was somewhat later than the period of which I am now treating, how I saved myself, by a desperate manœuvre, from the jaws of a hungry trout. The savage brute singled me out from among the rest of the shoal, and hunting me round and round until I was well-nigh exhausted, was on the point of making me his prey, when a bold and happy idea occurred to me : springing out of the water, six inches or more upon the dry shingle, I lay gasping and half dead with fear, but out of reach of my enemy. The refraction of the water enabled me to see him, though he could not see me ; he beat up and down the spot at which I had disappeared, with much the air of a retriever puppy, when the squirrel he has chased for the first time takes refuge in a tree. His search being in vain, he retired, and I had just strength left to squatter into the water again, and soon regained my accustomed haunt beneath the stone.¹

"There seems something very shocking, and contrary to the benevolent design of Nature, that animals so helpless and calculated to enjoy life as we were, should be exposed to these incessant attacks. Why are we not allowed to enjoy life in peace and happiness without fear or danger ?"

I broke in here upon the old gentleman's narrative. "Why, sir, did you not tell me just now that *your* great enjoyment was to devour all the little insects on or beneath the surface of the water that came within your reach ?"

¹ This anecdote was related to me by a lady who witnessed the occurrence, and in whose power of observation, as well as veracity, implicit reliance may be placed.

"What, sir," said he, testily, "has that to do with the matter ? Those miserable animated atoms were, doubtless, created expressly to feed us beings of a nobler order. If you compare a wretched gnat, or a miserable—"

I assured the choleric old gentleman I had no such intention, and begged him to proceed with his interesting narrative.

CHAPTER III.

"TIME rolled its ceaseless course ; days melted into weeks, and weeks into months ; upwards of a year¹ had passed since I—a small, helpless, misshapen embryo—had hidden myself under some casual pebble or fragment of a rock. I was then scarce an inch in length, my body marked with transverse bluish-grey lines, the 'badge of all our tribe,' and my head and eyes altogether out of proportion to my body. I was now some four inches long, trim, well-shaped, and vigorous. Although haunting the waters in which I had first breathed the breath of life, I had long since extended my rambles, and, in company with my brethren, sought the more rapid streams. We rejoiced in our newborn strength to stem the torrent, and vied with one another, whilst poised as hawks in mid-air, in seizing the small insects which were borne along the stream above us. Although there was a sameness in this life, it was not monotonous. We had become sufficiently cognizant of the dangers around us, but, with the buoyancy of youth, we felt more pride in our cleverness in escaping them than gratitude for the escape. Then the changes in the mighty river herself were subjects of perpetual interest. Sometimes stealing along in a quiet, deep channel but a few yards wide, worn through the rock, or between it and the green bank opposite, the spectator would wonder whence the broad expanse of shingle or barren sand had its

¹ My friend S. S. must know best, and it is not for me to contradict him; but I must say, that for a year old and upwards, he exhibited at this period a very juvenile appearance.

origin. Little would he wonder, if, after a week's rain, he sought the same spot, when Tweed was coming down in her might, and every tributary stream, transformed for the nonce into a river, swelled the mighty flood. Then, timber trees, sawn wood, dead animals, farming implements, even hay stacks, would come floating down, and the very channel of the river would be diverted and altered, sometimes never to return to its ancient course. Sad was the havoc occasioned to the embryo spawn; torn from its bed, it would be carried down the stream, to be devoured by the trout or the eel, or to perish amid the waste of waters. We felt on these occasions pretty safe. Our principal enemies were dispersed: the gulls sought worms in the ploughed-up lands; the kingfisher and the solitary heron flew away to the smaller streams, where the less turbid water permitted them to see their prey. The cold, slimy, cruel eel, alone of all our enemies, was then to be dreaded. Crawling along at the bottom of the water, his flat wicked head pressed against the gravel, so as to escape the force of the stream, the wily beast would insinuate himself into every crevice or corner where a small fish might have taken shelter, or a drowned worm be lodged, and all and either was prey to him. But, as I said, these perils pass lightly over, and were forgotten as soon as passed; 'we had health and we had hope,' and, so that the day passed pleasantly away, we had little care or thought for the morrow.

"A change was, however, to be wrought upon us. I had long observed in my companions, and could not but be conscious within myself, of a striking and beautiful alteration in our external appearance. Without losing the dark blue stripes, the distinctive marks of the salmon tribe, they became gradually coated over, as it were, with bright and silvery scales, as though we had been subjected to the process of electrotyping. I would not be thought vain, but I look back, even now, with feelings of pride and delight, at the image memory conjures up of the beautiful appearance we

presented. Glancing through the water, we glittered like fire-flies in the air. Our strength had increased in the same ratio as our beauty, and, when I say that our form was nearly as possible that which I now present, I need hardly say it was faultless."

"Really, sir!" I interposed, "for a gentleman who disclaims vanity—"

"Sir! I assert that the form of a salmon, fresh run from the sea, is faultless. Could the vigour he displays, could the strength he possesses, be lodged in any form short of faultless? Could he ascend the cataract—could he stem the roaring torrent—could he—" The old gentleman was getting into such a state of ebullition that I hastily checked him with a torrent of profuse apologies, not unmixed, I fear, with a *suspicion* of flapdoodle, the stuff which Mr. O'Brien informed Peter Simple they feed fools on. Something pacified, he proceeded:—

"With my increasing vigour, a strange feeling of restlessness came over me, a longing desire to wander forth into some unknown world of waters. The wide river seemed all too narrow to contain me; and one glorious May morning, when the heavy rains which had fallen on the mountains '*doon wast*' had swelled the river some foot or two, the migratory impulse became irresistible, and, accompanied by thousands of my companions, actuated by the same impulse, I dashed away down stream, seeking 'fresh fields and pastures new.'

"When the prisoner of Chillon looked out over his dungeon wall upon the waters of Lake Leman, the fish 'were joyous one and all,' but never in that still water so joyous as we—escaping, as it seemed to us now, from a hated monotonous existence, though Heaven knows we had been happy enough in it for many a month—felt, as we dashed along the rolling, rapid waters of fair Tweed. On! on! we went, through Boldside Water, and the rapid stream below it, through Carry Wheel, and that long, glorious reach of the Pavilion Water, which stretches from the railway to Melrose Bridge, through the Wyries and

the
water
Mel
we
at th
we
was
pride
I fel

"As
conf
serv
anch
one
I wa
in fa
the
in th
long
upon
it fa
carel
adv
a sm
appa
Rush
to th
prep
but a
sligh
prick
I fo
but i
until
boat,
net,
mys
hand
firml
treat
tracte
jaw.
dead,

"
the
me i
said t
" I

the Elm Wheel, and the still, broad waters that lave the meadows above Melrose. We leapt out of the water, we raced through the water, we dashed at the flies which settled on the surface; we would have shouted, but that speech was denied us; and, exulting in the pride of form and beauty and strength, I felt as though fate had no power over me. Alas! pride goeth before a fall."

CHAPTER IV.

"As thus buoyant, elated, and self-confident, I proceeded onwards, I observed a boat, with a young man in it, anchored in strange fashion a little on one side of the main stream down which I was passing. The anchor consisted, in fact, of another individual, older than the occupant of the boat, who, standing in the water as deep as his somewhat long legs would allow, leaned his weight upon the stern of the boat, and so held it fast in its position. I passed them carelessly, and, when but a few yards in advance, my attention was attracted to a small, struggling, brown fly, which had apparently just dropped into the water. Rushing towards it, and rising suddenly to the surface, I greedily seized, and was preparing to swallow the delicate morsel; but scarcely did it touch my lips when a slight but smart sensation, as of a thorn pricking my mouth, was felt by me, and I found myself dragged by some invisible but irresistible force against the stream, until, half choked, I approached the boat, into which, by the aid of a light net, I was instantly lifted. I found myself clasped by a dreadfully warm hand, and held, in spite of my struggles, firmly until the hook, attached to the treacherous fly I had seized, was extracted, not unmercifully, from my wounded jaw. I was already more than half dead, limp, faint, and bleeding.

"It's just a wee parr beastie," said the elder of the two, preparing to slip me into the water.

"It's of no use putting it back," said the other; "parr or not, it's dead."

"It may dee and be dom'd; I wash my

hands of it," was the reply with which my profane friend placed me in the water, carefully enough. I felt sick and helpless; without power to sustain my proper position, I floated, with my back downwards, until I rested against some long floating grass, a few yards from the boat, to which the eddy of the stream had carried me. Although too weak to move, I retained my senses, and heard the younger man say to his companion—

"Why, John, what made you throw that poor little dead beast into the water again?"

"Deed," was the reply, "yon beastie's just a smolt, an' there's a fine for killing sich like."

"But you killed a parr just now?"

"Ay."

"But you call this a parr?"

"Deed, an' it's the fau't of those who gie the same name to twa dif-ferent fishes."

"What do you mean?"

"A' mean that there's a wee fish ye killed just noo ca'ed "the parr," an' it's a fish of itself,¹ an' has melt an' roe as every ither fish has, an' ye'll find it in rivers an' burns, an' abune water-falls an' in mountain tarns, where no saumon ever yet was seen or could get, an' it's streekit an' barred all the same as the young saumon-parr; and it's just the confusion of ca'ing the twa by the ae name that's raised a' the fash that's made about the "edentity," as they ca' it, of the parr with the young saumon."

"Then you believe that the parr is not the young of the salmon?"

"If ye ca' the young saumon the parr, the parr is the young saumon; but there's anither parr that has a better right to the name, an' it's a pity that

¹ I have opened hundreds of the *Burn* Parr, *Salmo Samulus*, male and female. I have seen them on their spawning-beds, and taken them out of burns where salmon never yet ascended, nor could by possibility ascend. I have baited hooks with the tough little beggars, and released them alive after they had towed a trimmer for six hours about a loch; the salmon parr being as soft as a pat of butter, and endowed with about as much power of sustaining hardships. Doubtless the young salmon is the parr, but the parr is not always the young salmon.

twa fish should be bund to hae but ae name betwixt them.'

"At this point of the conversation, feeling myself somewhat recovered from the effects of my immersion in the uncongenial air, I struggled from my resting-place, and, after one or two abortive attempts at swimming, which resulted in a circular, aimless movement, I found myself carried out of ear-shot down-stream. By the time that I had quite recovered myself, and, with the careless and elastic spirit of youth, had already forgotten the severe lesson I had experienced, I found myself on the brink of a precipice, over which, to what unknown depths I could not guess, the great river was hurried in ceaseless flow. This was the cauld, or dam, that by the supernatural agency of the wondrous wizard, Michael Scot, 'bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone,' just above the beautiful old abbey of Melrose. Pausing for a second to collect my energies, instinctively I turned my head up-stream, and, swimming with all my power against it, allowed myself to be carried over the rock, and down into the foaming water below. The shock was much less in reality than in anticipation; I speedily recovered my senses, and, blithe and free, resumed my downward course. I may mention here, that this manoeuvre of swimming tail first was constantly practised by us whenever the force of the stream was too great to allow of our progressing safely in the ordinary way. Our movements were eccentric but graceful; darting at intervals ostensibly upwards, but always yielding, and, like the snail in the problem, descending ten feet for every one we ascended. By yielding to the might of the river, we were carried more safely and pleasantly on our destined course.

"Passing the glorious old ruins of Dryburgh Abbey—scarce, if at all, inferior to those of Melrose—I speedily reached another cauld or dam, and, passing it with equal ease and less fear than the former, I swam along by woody Mallerstoun through one of the narrow chan-

nels called the 'Clippers,' over which at low water an active man may jump, by the magnificent castle of Floors, and, tarrying but to taste the sweet waters of the Teviot, on through Kelso Bridge and Sprouston Dubs, through the Edemouth and Carham Waters to Coldstream Bridge. In this neighbourhood I escaped, by pure good fortune, a danger that I afterwards learnt proved fatal to thousands—nay, tens of thousands—of my young companions. The stream had apparently divided, and, whilst I followed the course of the right hand one, the greater number passed down the wider but less rapid left hand division. Here they speedily encountered a terrific mill-wheel, and, dashing on one side, they found their progress stopped by a small net, which being passed under them, they were landed literally by bushels. My informant, who escaped by passing under the mill-wheel at the imminent risk of being crushed to atoms, assured me that the bodies of our betrayed brethren were used as manure! And, degrading as the suggestion is, it seems not impossible, for the numbers taken could not be sold or used for food. The water-bailiffs, a useless crew, who, at the time the river chiefly requires protection, usurp the places of the private keepers—connive at or refuse to notice this wholesale destruction, and content themselves by seizing and bringing before the magistrate the wretched urchins who, with a long stick and a long string, a schoolboy at one end and the most distant approximation to the semblance of a fly at the other, fill their breeches' pocket with smolts, and run home to boil them for 'daddy's supper.' Doubtless many thousands are destroyed in this way, but what is that when our prolific nature is considered? Every female of our wondrous race lays, on an average, eight thousand eggs! And, so long as we have only our natural enemies to contend with, the rivers we affect will be stocked to repletion in spite of all the schoolboys betwixt Peebles and Berwick."

CHAPTER V.

"You think then, sir," said I, "that the water-bailiffs are useless?"

"By no means," said he, in a more argumentative and less dictatorial tone than he had hitherto used; "but they should be supplemental to, and not in the place of, the 'fishermen' or private keepers. These men know every pool, and rock, and haunt of a fish, spawning or otherwise, on their respective waters. They are directly interested in the increase of the fish, and they generally know and are *not* connected with the poachers. Yet on a certain day, as a rule, the keepers, one or more of whom are attached to each water, are *functi officiis*, and their places supplied by water-bailiffs, to one of whom is frequently entrusted three or four miles of river, and who is somehow invariably at the farthest part of the beat, whilst his kinsmen, and possibly former comrades, are stopping the ascending or 'leistering' the spawning fish."

I have always doubted in my own mind whether the above lucubrations emanated in reality from my strange companion, or whether they were not in fact the embodiment of my own dreamy notions: for, truth to say, my friend had become somewhat prosy, and an "exposition of sleep" had come over me. I roused myself, however, and listened with marked attention as he proceeded in his natural tone:—

"At last, then, we had attained the goal of our hopes, the unknown object of our yearning aspirations; and never were wishful anticipations—offspring of the promptings of Nature—more abundantly satisfied. Not only did the novel element in which we found ourselves—for so unlike was it to that which we had hitherto inhabited, it might properly be so called—brace and invigorate our frames, rendering us keenly sensible of the delightful sensation of wandering at will, through what seemed to us boundless space; but the waters absolutely teemed with life,—marine insects and molluscs, shrimps and prawns, young

crabs and lobsters, sea-worms, embryo creatures of lower organization in millions, all destined doubtless for our sustenance and delectation, and for the gratifying (satisfying seemed out of the question) our appetite, which 'grew with what it fed on.' And we grew too; how could we otherwise, consuming as we did almost our own weight daily of the most nutritious and palatable food?

"I have heard wonder expressed that so small a fish as the smolt should, in a few short months, increase from the weight of three or four ounces to that of frequently twice as many pounds. But where is the wonder? My mother, who was murdered on the spawning beds before half her eggs had been deposited, weighed twenty pounds; the noble kipper, her companion, half as much again. What would be the weight at more than two years old of a dog, offspring of parents such sizes? And was ever puppy fed as we were fed? No! *Fortes creantur fortibus.* Large animals and large fishes produce large offspring, and when I left the sea and again ascended my native Tweed in July, I weighed nearly seven pounds. But I anticipate.

"Although the world of waters was all before us where to choose, we never of our own accord wandered far away from the land. Coasting along we hugged the shore, and thereby not only secured a greater abundance of food, but escaped many dangers to which those who were driven by accident or fear away into the unknown depths of remoter waters were exposed. True, danger even in the humble path we had chosen for ourselves met us in every turn. Dog-fish, and cod-fish, and porpoises, and seals, and otters preyed upon us remorselessly, but the numbers of the four first, at least, were greatly increased as we increased our distance from the shore; besides which, we lost those landmarks which gave us confidence that we should one day be enabled to retrace our steps, and saved us from the bewildering sensation of being utterly lost. Few fish, once driven out to sea, ever returned to our company; they were devoured, or perished from want of proper food, or,

if haply they reached some unknown shore, wandered listlessly and helplessly along it, seeking a stream or river suitable to their wants, and, finding none, perished miserably.

"Great indeed is the wickedness and heavy the responsibility of that greedy, selfish class—thank Heaven! now at last a limited one—which, having acquired in some incomprehensible manner the legal right of privately destroying what ought to have been the most cherished, as it is the most valuable, public property, planted those accursed engines, the stakes-nets, along the coast and in the tide-ways known as the highways most frequented by our persecuted race. Nor is the fatal result that of chance only. As the shoal of salmon and grilse feel their way along shore, they run against the guide-net, stretching far away into the sea. Turning to avoid the danger seaward, they are exposed to the attacks of ravenous hakes and dog-fish, approaching in size to sharks; these, with the seals, watch the entrance to the nets in murderous numbers, having learnt by experience the rich banquet afforded by the terrified fugitives.

"However, these and many other dangers, which in the course of twelve months left scarcely one in five hundred of my original companions alive, affected such of us as escaped no more than the unknown perils of our childhood. 'Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate.' My life was passed in one continued dream of sensual enjoyment. But all such pleasures, even to the brute creation, are of short duration. I had for some little time become aware of a feeling of satiety, a desire for change; and it was, I think, about the middle of June that this feeling heightened into an impulse, strong as that which, in May of the previous year, had driven me down into the sea. As to Lord Lovel, 'a longing wish came over my mind' to revisit my early haunts, and to taste again that sweet fresh water I had so gladly left. Besides, whilst wandering through the waving groves of sea-weed in search of my prey, certain sea-lice had detached

themselves from their sapless stems, to browse upon my 'fair pasture.' They swarmed upon my gills, and other parts of my body, to my great annoyance. Instinct told me that these creatures could not exist in fresh water; so, in company with a few stragglers, the remnants of my early companions, and many elder fish, I turned my head, and resolutely commenced my homeward journey."

CHAPTER VI.

"ALTHOUGH the time spent in the sea was really considerable, and the experiences acquired appeared to our youthful imaginations illimitable, the actual distance passed in our wanderings was not great, and a few days found us at the broad estuary into which fair Tweed empties herself. Here, after tarrying a short time to accustom our palates to the change from salt to fresh water, and impelled by the sweet taste of an unusual flow of the latter, we ran at once into the mouth of the river, prepared to ascend with the flowing tide of that night. Little indeed did we calculate upon the destructive power of men, whose living was our death. We had collected, as I said, by hundreds, still in the sea, but close to the mouth of the river. Suddenly a boat, manned by two stout rowers, put off, and, whilst they rowed quickly round us, the third paid off an immense net of apparently endless length, and deep enough to sweep the bottom. So rapidly was this effected, that, notwithstanding a strong feeling of imminent danger, we found ourselves surrounded, and, the two ends of the net being joined on the shore, entrapped and confined within a circle becoming, as it was hauled in, gradually of smaller dimensions. In vain, swimming wildly about and around, we sought some outlet of escape—there was none; slowly, but surely, the mighty circle lessened and still lessened, until we found ourselves dragged to the very shore, and there, heaped on one another, we lay, a mass of helpless, struggling fish, gasping, flapping, choking, suffocating, rolling

one over another, and exhausting our little remaining strength in futile jumps, or vain endeavours to hide ourselves beneath the doomed mass of the victims. Already the dull, heavy thud of the short club, used by the fishermen to despatch those fish that came readiest to hand, sounded in our ears; already hope had given way to despair, and I, like the rest, felt with the hope the desire of life to perish; when a cry arose among our captors that the net was breaking! Such indeed was the fact; the net had been pulled somewhat too high upon the shore, and the vast weight of more than three hundred fish, aided by the struggles of some of the heaviest, broke the meshes, and in a moment we were free! Many of my companions were nevertheless seized and killed; but by far the greater number, myself included, rushed through the wide opening, and dashed back again to the friendly sea we had so lately left. What became of my companions I know not,—many doubtless were lost, many devoured: for myself, I lingered sadly about the spot, and should have in all probability shared the latter fate, but that I was accosted by a female of my own race, bright and beautiful, but twice my size and age. She told me she was seeking the spawning beds above, and I, as youth ever does, felt an instinctive love and veneration for one so much older and grander than myself. She told me of the dangers she had escaped, almost by a miracle, the year before; how, after being twice all but taken in the drag-nets, from which I had just escaped, she had entered the river; how for some miles as she ascended, when her back or that of her larger companion was seen above the surface of the shallow water, there had been a cry of ‘Fish! Fish!’ and then a net had been hastily dragged across her path, whilst another was stretched below to prevent her return; how men with loud shouts or splashings of the water had driven the devoted fish into the toils before them; how at each projecting rock, forming still water where the struggling fish

might rest, a net was placed; how the deep pools affording a more permanent harbour were dragged; and how, when at last the shallow spawning beds were attained, many of her race were ‘gaffed’ for the sake of the spawn within them. Such was the fate of the baggit from which I sprang, some particulars of which I learnt in after times. I may as well relate them now.”

CHAPTER VII.

“I was lying listlessly one day in summer thirty feet beneath the surface, beyond the influence of the rapid stream above, in the fathomless pool called The Pot, some half mile below Merton Bridge, a boat, kept in its place by two light oars, floating above me, when the fragments of a conversation reached my ears, which by degrees absorbed my attention. A river-keeper was detailing to his employer the circumstances connected with the capturing of a poacher.

“‘Ay, sir,’ he said, ‘but that saumon-roie is a sair temptation; mony a guid mon has been beguiled by it. A’ ken aye, a baillie; a’ took him myself.’

“‘How came that? Tell us all about it,’ was the reply.

“‘A’ was watching, mebbe six months syne, up in the Pavilion Water; the fish were thranging sair upon the spawning-beds, and weel a’ kent they were thrang on the bank abune the Whirlies. A’ was hidden in the wee brae just abune the brig, and a’ hadn’ been there mebbe twa hour, when a’ see a mon come daintly alang. Looking carefully this way an’ that, an’ seeing naebody, he just out wi’ the gaff, an’, screwing it on to the end of his walking-stick, stepped lightly into the water. It wouldn’ be mickle abune his knee, an’ the back fin o’ mair than ae great fish was plain to be seen on the bank before him. ‘Deed, but he wasted little time in selection, an’ varra little ceremony he treated ‘em with. In a second the gaff was in a puir half-spawned beastie, an’, lugging her ashore, he started aff het foot towards Melrose. A’ up an’ after him, an’ for a

weighty mon he made mickle running. When he saw me he dropped the fish, but no' stopping to pick it up, a' just kept on under the railway brig, down the meadows, by Ailwand Foot, under Melrose Brig, an' there, as he was creeping up the steep bank, a' grippit hold of him ahint ; a' grippit hard, an' he turned and said, "Sandy, lad ! dinna grip sae hard ; ye'll rive ma breams." "Ay, Baillie," said I, "is that you ? How cam' ye to do it ?" And he said quite solemn-like, "Sandy !" he said, "It was neether the need nor the greed, but just *the saumon-roë !*" "Ech, Baillie," a' said, "a' wadna' have believed it of ye, but it will be dear saumon-roë to ye." And sae it proved, for he was fined five pund, and ither harm cam' of it.'

"And served him right," said his companion ; 'a man ought to be hanged who kills a spawning fish on its bed. Why ! the very Jews under divine command spared the sitting bird, the nursing mother ; and what is the value of a flavourless bird laying half-a-dozen eggs at most, to that of the noble salmon which lays eight thousand !'

"Deed, ye speak true, sir," said the other voice ; 'an' its aye a strange thing to me, that ony ca'ing themselves sportsmen can condescend to fish wi' roë. It's just no sport ava, an' the best trouts that are killed, though the biggest in the haill river, are no worth the killing.'

"Indeed I believe you ; but I never saw the operation of fishing with roë. How is it performed ?"

"Aweel, ye require neither rod, nor line, nor gut, nor reel, nor onything but just a strong stick—a stake out of the hedge is about as guid as anither—an'a bit of cord, no matter how thick, an'a heuk with a bittock of lead to sink her, an'a lump of roë as muckle mebbe as a marley is put intil it ; an' ye tak' the highest flood and the darkest water, an' ye stan' on the bank, an' the spent trout that have spawned, ye ken, seek the still waters close in shore, an' they're varra empty and hungry belike, an', when ye feel they swallow the roë, ye just fling 'em ower your head ; an'a' the best trout in Tweed are caught that way.'

"By Jove !" said his companion, 'your friend, the baillie, deserved a ducking for his snobbishness, as well as a fine for his wickedness ! I wish I had the power, and I'd make it felony to fish with salmon-roë.'

Sinking down to the quiet depths below, and pondering upon what I had heard, I fully concurred in the sentence last uttered, on general as well as selfish grounds."

CHAPTER VIII.

"DANGERS, fears, and perils forgotten, the next morning found my companion and myself again at the mouth of the river. The scarce ebbing tide brought with it the smell and taste of a freshet, the result of the last night's rain, and we stemmed the retreating tide more boldly as we felt the assurance of good swimming water above.

"It was Saturday morning; from that day to Monday the river is free ; so for thirty hours at least our persecutors were restrained from crying, 'Havoc' upon our devoted race. No net, no boat, stopped our way ; we swam joyously up stream, and by noon that day had passed the well-remembered Norham Bridge. Here we met a little crowd of frightened fish, returning to the sea, dismayed and disheartened, as well they might be. This sparse band, scarce half a score in number, were all that remained of some five hundred noble fish who had attempted the passage but the day before. They had escaped the long sea-nets, and the more deadly drags used in the river ; they had been hunted in the shallows, and pelted in the streams, and, when they might fairly hope for rest and safety, they had found themselves debarred from the goal they sought, by a long, deep, heavy net fastened right across the stream, sunk a little below the water, and intended to keep the fish

¹ There are those who think that the common trout, on account of the injury he does to the salmon-roë, should be, if possible, annihilated. I differ; but, with that object in view, no more efficient instrument exists than angling in spring with roë.

from passing upwards during the short period from Saturday to Monday, when net-fishing ostensibly ceases, until they could legally be dragged out of the pool on Monday morning. They urged us to return,¹ and seek the comparative safety of the sea, swarming as it did with our natural enemies, in preference to placing ourselves within the power of those short sighted, unprincipled scoundrels, who disgrace the name of fisherman ! Had I been unsupported, my natural timidity, enhanced by the remembrance of the dangers I had gone through, would have induced me to accompany them, but my more experienced and bolder companion overruled their counsel. She told them how, by swimming on the surface of the water, instead of the bed of the river, on which to escape the force of the stream our course had hitherto been held, we should escape the danger, and how essential it was to our health, and the preservation of our race, that the upper waters, where alone fitting spawning-beds could be found, should be reached ; she pointed out how even yet the sea-lice clung to our gills and bodies, and promised us that twenty-four hours' sojourn in the fresh water would relieve us from each one : finally, taunting us with the timidity evidenced by going back after daring so much, and advancing so far, she succeeded in persuading us to risk all chances and follow her lead. For myself, I dashed recklessly after her over the net of which we had already taken stock, as we advanced towards it. Many of our companions followed, and a few hours brought us, without further let or hindrance, to the Cauld Pool, below the well-remembered ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, where all that is mortal of the great poet and novelist of Scotland lies interred. Here, taking advantage of the comparatively still water behind a large submerged rock, we rested motionless and silent, and though 'we, like mortals, never

sleep,' enjoyed that perfect rest which cessation from labour, and the total oblivion from cares and troubles, ever bring with them.

" This, and a portion of the following day, were thus serenely spent. The sea-lice which had clung to our scales, unable to exist in the fresh water, had dropped off, and no care or trouble was present. A restless feeling had, indeed, arisen within me, and I was on the point of suggesting to my companions a movement higher and still higher up the stream, when my attention was attracted by what appeared to me a familiar object—a shrimp or prawn, or some other small object of the ocean so lately quitted, and which had furnished me with many a bountiful meal. It floated gently over my head, not over bright in colour, but showy, and its hues, which were dispersed uniformly over its body, blended together, and formed one harmonious whole. Its movements were short and rapid, such as are those of the insects—'crustaceæ,' I think, is the proper term—I have referred to, and it seemed to be striving, with doubtful result, to stem the somewhat rapid stream. What induced me I cannot say ; I was not hungry ; indeed, I had felt no desire to eat since I entered the fresh water ; I was hardly in the mood for play, for I felt that the serious business of life was before me ; but, impelled by some unaccountable impulse, I rose from my resting-place, and attempted to seize it in my mouth. The motion was rapid, but still too slow to be effectual ; the creature vanished ere my lips could close on it. Whilst turning slowly round to seek my former station—somewhat sulkily, too, for the object I had failed to attain had, in consequence, acquired a value it had not previously possessed—I heard a voice say,—

" 'Ay, but that was a bonny grilse ! Ay, but it was a grand rise he made, too ! Ye were ower quick in striking.'

" 'I think I was,' was the reply ; 'but we'll try again.'

" 'Bide a wee, sir ; bide a wee ; give him time to return to his old station before you show him the flee again.'

¹ Running fish, especially grilse, are frequently turned back by meeting others which, having been scared by the nets, are again returning to the sea, thus affording a double chance of capture to their vigilant enemies.

"Utterly unconscious of the meaning of these words, and in no respect connecting them with myself or my doings, I saw with some surprise, not unmixed with pleasure, the little jerking figure again passing within three feet of my nose. There was a band of silver round its throat that excited my cupidity, and I was, moreover, somewhat nettled at the failure of my previous attempt to seize it. Without a moment's pause, I dashed at it, and, seizing the bright wings between my lips, was prepared, at least, to carry it down with me, to be swallowed or not, as might happen; when, to my amazement and alarm, ere I could so much as turn away after my spring, the creature snatched itself from out my very jaws, and vanished as it had previously done. Sulky and annoyed, I sought again my resting-place, and again I heard the same voice which had before spoken—

"'Deed, sir, ye were just ower hasty again; ye dinna let the fish tak' a grip of the flee before you snatch it out of his mouth.'

"'Never mind, Sandy; we'll try again.'

"'A'm thinking I'll just change 'the flee; mebbe he's seen ower muckle of this ane.'

"Read from the light of after experience, these words were plain enough; but, young and inexperienced as I was, they conveyed no meaning, no warning, and it can hardly be wondered at that, tantalized as I had been, no sooner did I see a creature, similar in form and habit to the other, but somewhat larger and brighter, apparently striving to stem the stream a little above me, than, again dashing at it, I seized it firmly in my teeth, and, turning round, was going back to my lair, when I felt a sharp, smarting pain, a convulsive shock shook my frame, and I found myself madly struggling against some great, unknown, invisible power, which controlled my will, and, for a time at least, rendered me helpless, almost hopeless.

"Willing to realize the worst, and anxious to learn something certain respecting my condition, I rushed upwards, and, jumping high in the air, saw two

men standing on the bank, with whose movements, with reference to my own position, I had no difficulty in tracing the connexion. The one with a long rod in his hand, the line from which restrained and controlled me, stood motionless, whilst the other, with a horrible hook attached to the end of a stick in his hand, seemed to be aiding and advising him.

"'Canny, lad,' I heard him say; 'canny, noo; he is but light heukit; I ken by his jumping. Canny, noo; he's just a fresh-run grilse, an' his mouth unco saft.'

"I had heard enough; and by this time my terror had somewhat abated, and my natural energy returned in aid of the strength with which I was gifted. No longer coursing about the pool with aimless rapidity, or wasting my strength in fruitless jumps, I dropped back gradually into the deep pool behind, and, sinking to the bottom, lay motionless behind the big rock I had so lately quitted. My companion was still beside me, and, though she could render no assistance, her presence was an aid and consolation to me, and I felt cooler and stronger for her sympathy. Aided by the weight of water above me, I defied the power still exercised by my persecutor to move me. I felt but little pain, and, but for the choking sensation occasioned by the interference of the free passage of water through my gills, little annoyance; and it was only on observing a huge stone, thrown for the purpose of dislodging me, descending directly upon my head, that I started from my lair. Rushing wildly away, my escape was brought about by the very means intended for my destruction. Impeded by the line, my movement was slow, and the stone, barely missing me, fell upon the line itself, released the hook from the slight hold it had in my mouth, and I felt that I was free! Joyous, exulting in my deliverance, I again sought the surface, and, as I jumped two or three times out of the water, I had the satisfaction of observing visible marks of disappointment and regret on the countenances of my friends on shore. The one stood with his rod straight upwards,

his line floating down the stream, himself in the precise attitude in which he had maintained that dead, strong pull against me, which, by exhausting my strength, had so nearly proved fatal ; the other was apparently solacing himself with a pinch of snuff, and the only words I heard him utter were,—

“ ‘ Ay, but that was a bonny grilse !
Deil tak’ the stane ! ’ ”

CHAPTER IX.

“ THE Cauld Pool, so lately a pleasant haven of rest, was no longer an abiding place for me. The dread and terror I had endured were associated with every rock and stone about me ; and, had I stayed there for a month to come, I am certain that no gaud, however cunningly devised, would have tempted me so much as to look at it. The freshet, however, still continued ; there was good swimming water, and that very night, my faithful companion by my side, I ascended the heavy fall which descended the ‘cauld’ or dam, and proceeded onwards towards those faintly but dearly-remembered scenes of my early youth, the waters of Upper Tweed.

“ I may here correct a very common error as to the manner in which we salmon ascend a rapid. In many pictures, in many books, we are represented as leaping over a rapid some fifteen or twenty feet in height. This is simply absurd. Excepting in the exuberance of spirits, occasioned by escape from danger, the attempt to escape that danger, or under the peculiar influence caused by a change in the weight of the atmosphere, we never *jump* : we *swim* up a rapid, and what appears like a jump is nothing more than the abortive result of a misdirected effort ; an attempt, in fact, to swim in a perpendicular direction up a stream, which descends more or less horizontally.

“ One or two failures occurred, but with little difficulty we surmounted the obstacle, and, swimming rapidly onwards by the low green meadows and woody banks above Melrose, we made no further pause till we reached that long extent

of unrivalled water, where may still be seen the foundations of the old bridge, the gate of which, in the days when ‘the Monastery’ was still entire, was kept by the churlish Peter, the bridgeward. Here, again, choosing our station behind a projecting stone, we rested ; and, whilst many of our companions passed onwards, a considerable number, and those of a large size, took up their position around us. Indeed, the place was, in every respect, satisfactory, and adapted to our requirements. Shelfing gradually from the southern side, the force of the stream increased proportionately with its depth, so that, with the least trouble, we could seek such depth and strength of water as suited our tastes for the time : excepting a few large stones, behind which we usually lay, the bottom of the stream was perfectly level ; and, as the river made a considerable angle on the opposite side, beneath the steep, wood-crowned bank, we could at any time bask in the sun, or exchange its sultry beams for the cool shadow beyond.

“ In addition to the companions of our voyage, and many others who had previously ascended with the same object —to deposit their spawn on the gravelly beds, so common in the upper waters—our pool contained a large number of kelts,¹ fish, that is, which during the preceding winter and early spring had successfully deposited their spawn, and were now sinking downwards by easy stages towards that land, if I may use an Irishism, of plenty, the sea. These kelts were the jolliest of fish ; they seemed like married men escaped for a short period from the cares of a family, and the troubles of housekeeping. They ate minnows, and parr, and the

¹ I constantly observe in that excellent paper, the *Field*, pungent gibes directed against the slayer of the kelt. In the same paper, too, I occasionally observe diatribes upon batte-shooting, which is likened to slaying cocks and hens in a farmyard. Now, I am no friend to over-preserving, and fully admit that batte-shooting may be carried too far ; but the man who can stand at a cross-ride, and toss five out of six rocketting pheasants dead ten yards behind him, or can kill a “weel mendit” kelt in Tweed, in the month of May, take my word for it, that of the editor of this veracious history, is no maff !

late samlets of the previous year, and water insects, and worms, and slugs, and, in fact, whatever came uppermost. Though thin and emaciated when they left the spawning-beds, good cheer told upon them, and I have rarely seen a handsomer specimen of our race than a grand eighteen-pound kelt, with whom I struck up a passing acquaintance as we sheltered behind the same stone in the Brig End Pool. He was, perhaps, a trifle longer in proportion to his depth than a fresh run fish ; his back had a bluish tinge, and he was less thick about the tail ; but the scales beneath were of silvery white ; he was altogether well-proportioned and well-favoured ; and his strength was evidenced by the ease with which he poised himself, like a bird in the air, even in the rapid part of the stream. What fun it must be, thought I, to be hungry ! as I saw him dash playfully upwards at a gaudy-winged butterfly which, after hovering a moment above us, had dropped exhausted into the stream, and was now, despite his struggles, manifestly drowning. I had seen my friend the day before, when the water was somewhat muddy, absolutely gorge himself upon dead worms, and other not over-delicate *débris*, that floated down the stream. The butterfly was more after my own taste, and, as he rose at the painted fly, he rose in my estimation. But what is this ? Scarcely had he, with a sweep of his mighty tail, reached the surface, when he descended again, rushing by me in evident terror and alarm, and seeking, with a rapid but rather constrained motion, the dark depths below. The facts of the case were apparent to me instantly. My poor friend, in the buoyancy of his spirits, had seized, more in playfulness than in greed, the treacherous imitation of a fly, cast by one of the deadliest foes to our race on Tweed. No hope of release from a friendly misdirected stone was here ; if a stone were thrown it might startle, but never loose, the fish ; and, confident in the strength of his tackle and the delicacy of his touch, little did the fisher heed the poor kelt's attempt at sulking. Not, as in my case, was the

strain upwards, giving me the advantage of the whole weight of water to increase the resistance, but sideways the force was exerted, at an angle which deprived the devoted fish of all help from that source. Indeed, the run of the stream was in the direction of the slow, strong, steady pull, persistently kept up, and to which at first slowly, but eventually with a rush, like that of a hawk through the air, the kelt was constrained to yield. Dashing up stream, with a velocity still comparable to that of the bird, he sought the rough pass above the railway bridge, where haply he might cut the envious line against the sharp edges of the rocks, or rub the cruel hook from the jaw in which it was too securely fixed ; but this was not allowed. The strong, pliant rod was in no tyro's hand, and the maddest efforts of the fish were controlled by a power which, though felt to be irresistible, could never be measured or met by opposed strength. In vain, rushing upwards, did the poor animal dash three feet from the surface of the water into the thin air, hoping in his descent to fall upon the line, and so disengage the biting hook ; in vain, I say, for rod, and eye, and line, and hand seemed guided by one impulse alone, and that derived from the struggling fish. As he jumped, the hand yielded, the rod bent, the strain of the line loosened, and the quiet eye twinkled with exultation, as, gaining nothing by the exhausting effort, the poor fish sought again his native element. Weakened and failing, unable to drag the weighty line against the rapid stream, the fish now turned his head downwards, and with an imitation, rather than the reality, of strength, dashed away at his former pace. But swimming down stream, with a hook in one's mouth, is a game that cannot be long played. Breathing, as fishes breathe, becomes impossible ; and with pain I speedily beheld my poor acquaintance turn on his back, and approach, with no will of his own, the low shelving bank of shingle, where the shallow water left half his huge body exposed. A large net was passed under him, and whilst, as being dragged

ashore, the exulting ‘whoo whoop !’ of his captor rang in my ears, I naturally concluded that I had seen the last of my gallant, handsome, ill-fated friend. Such, however, was not the case; and the conversation that reached me before he was returned to the water, as to my great surprise he was, explained the cause of his good fortune.”

CHAPTER X.

“‘HURRAH ! Hurrah ! A clean fish at last ! And what a beauty ! What do you think of *that* ?’

“‘Hoot ! It’s no fish ava ! It’s just a kelt beastie.’

“‘A kelt ! Why, now I look at it, it is a kelt ; but it is a grand fish, and the sport it showed first-rate.’

“‘And what for no’ ? A fish that’s fattened in the river, wi’ guid, wholesome food, is just as strong as ony fattened in the sea, an’ it kens, mind ye, every hole, and stream, and rock in the pool, an’ it’s no’ sae frightened at the bank’s side as a fish fresh-run from the sea, where there is no bound on ony side.’

“‘And about the eating ?’

“‘Weel, I’ll no’ say that the eating is sae guid as a clean fresh-run salmon ; ‘deed, there’s naething in nature can beat that ; the fish caught in the nets are no’ to be compared to it ; but it’s guid, wholesome food for a’ that, an’ dainty eneuch. I was up to London ten years syne to gie evidence, as they ea’ it, anent salmon and sich like, an’ ech ! the evidence I heard given ! There was ae lad swore that *his* fish were bred in the sea, an’ had no necessity to come to the rivers at a’ ! There was another swore that it was the Saturday’s slap that destroyed the fish, for it just allowed those who would have returned to the sea, there to spawn in safety, to gae up the river to be kilt by the poacher ! I saw on the stalls of the fishmongers, as ye ea’ them, mony mair kelts than clean fish ; an’, though they were a thought paler in colour, an’ I kenned weel, varra inferior in taste, they seemed to sell the ane as well as the ither.’

“‘Then you think kelts ought to be killed ?’

“‘Hoo’, not at a’ ! But a kelt that is fit to be kilt an’ eaten should be kilt an’ eaten. What for no’ ? Ye’ll tak’ mebbe twal or aughteen fish in a morning, an’, out of them a’, twa or four, mebbe, are weel mendit. A’d gie *them* a tap on the head, an’ they’re just the fish that gie the greatest sport, an’ mony aue dees from exhaustion when putten back into the river. The rest might swim away an’ be thankful, an’, if some of them dee, what are they after a’ but single fish ?’

“Whilst speaking, my friend had carefully disengaged the hook from the gasping fish, and, with one hand below its body beneath the water, and the other grasping its tail, had launched him, as it were, into the deep pool. As it felt itself loosed from restraint, a convulsive effort of the tail drove the sickened, half-alive beast some five feet diagonally across the stream, and then it helplessly resigned itself to the force of the water, floating unresistingly down stream. Whether the good fish lived or died I know not ; but, if it died—and many that have been hooked, and fought well, I know have died—it were better that it should have furnished food for human beings, than for the foul-feeding carrion-crow, or the slimy ravenous eel.

“Time passed on, and still found me a denizen of Brig End Pool. Fish came and went, and some tarried beside me, and some passed upward. The kelts, one and all, dropped down the stream by degrees, and by the end of May not one was left. In August, I found myself surrounded either by fish of my own standing which had passed months in the water, fresh-run salmon, the early kelts of the preceding year, or grilse, which, having descended the preceding year to the salt water, had now returned, ranking with myself in age, and, as nearly as possible, in size.

“During my sojourn in the pool, many and many a lure passed over me, and many times I felt half inclined to seize the tempting bait, but I always restrained myself ; every rock, and ripple, and

cliff, and stream, reminded me of the struggles of my first friend the kelt, or some other doomed fish, for many a gallant struggle was I witness to, between the fisherman and the credulous fish, the victim of his perfidious art. Of these some escaped, but the majority were, after more or less resistance, dragged ashore and killed. Of the various wiles practised by those fortunates who did escape, it may be interesting to make some passing mention. One, I remember, a grand fish of some eighteen pounds' weight, at the first touch of the hook dashed with lightning speed down stream, turning neither to the right nor to the left, running out a hundred yards of line. The fisherman having neglected to tie a knot at the end, there was nothing to stop it, and the great fish sailed away seawards, dragging in his wake two pounds' worth of excellent tackle. No doubt a few hours relieved him from the encumbrance, and his would-be captor paid not too dearly for a lesson he was unlikely to forget. One very extraordinary escape I witnessed was precisely analogous to my own when a smolt. The fish was hooked from the north or high shore; terrified apparently beyond the influence of instinct or reason, he dashed madly up the shelving bank on the opposite side, and lay gasping three feet beyond the shoal water. Taken aback by this utterly unexpected manœuvre, the fisherman slackened his hold, and the fish, with the same effort that restored him to his native waters, shook the hook from out of his mouth. I have seen fish escape by running rapidly round a rock, obtaining either for themselves a dead pull, and so wrenching the barb from their jaws, or, leaving a dead pull against the rock itself to the fisherman, afford him an excellent opportunity of breaking his tackle and releasing his prey. I have seen a fish spring three feet out of the water, when struck, and contrive in his descent to fall on the line, so as to break the hold of the hook. I have seen many, when but slightly hooked, by a violent and continuous effort shake the hook out of their mouths; and I have seen others, well hooked but too tightly

held, break the strong line like pack-thread, or straighten the hook itself as though it were made of pin-wire. But perhaps the most efficacious, and to the fisherman annoying mode of escape, was one not uncommonly practised by a clean run vigorous fish. Indeed, I must own that, though the kelts showed more craft and cunning, and brought to their aid great physical power, the fresh-run fish, for a clean rush and a stand-up fight, beat them hollow. The dodge they practised was as follows: swimming near the surface, and rushing down stream some thirty or forty yards, they suddenly sought the bottom, and returned upon their tracks with scarce diminished speed. The weighty water bagging out the line, gave the fisher, more especially if a tyro, the idea that his intended victim's course was still downwards, and, paying out line rapidly, he enabled the fish to bring such a weight of water upon it as eventually to necessitate its breakage. The first intimation Piscator had of the escape of his prey was the exulting bound of the salmon some fifty yards above the spot which in his imagination was occupied by that attached to his own line. This mode of effecting an escape I have heard designated as *drowning*, and certainly I have seen fishermen, after the manœuvre had been practised at their expense, look as though drowning were an enviable escape from their mortification. Another most successful manœuvre resorted to by a hooked fish, especially if a long line were thrown, was the running in of the salmon right to the feet of the fishermen. In vain the rod was held aloft, in vain the reel was wound with reckless haste, in vain its holder receded from the river bank; the line *would* become slack, and a shake and a scuffle at once got rid of the hook, unless it had penetrated more than ordinarily deep, or had struck upon some soft part of the fish's *n*. Happily, however, for us, there are few such parts in our mouths; if fresh-run the palate is soft, but the bone is hard beneath, and, if we have been long in the water, it is hard throughout; whether or no, a regular, firm, and equal strain

mus
esca
rod,
or t
it b
shal
had

" T
mel
win
ban
colc
lieu
prev
arou
wer
of t
thou
ben
It v
bed
our
and
vige
rec

the
plete
our
we
the
But
onr
con
tho
cau
us
mil
tar
com
sem
wh
had
an

1
ren
of
con
one
be
2
w

must be kept on the hook, or the fish escapes ; if the strain be too strong, the rod, or the line, or the gut, or the hook, or the hold in the mouth is broken ; if it be slack, it is at once, and with ease, shaken out. On the whole, I wish we had no worse enemies than fishermen !”¹

CHAPTER XI.

“THE seasons wore on ; summer had melted into autumn, and the breath of winter had blown icily on the woody banks of the beautiful river. Strange colours were reflected from the banks in lieu of the dark green that had so long prevailed, and the dead leaves whirled around by the eddies of the fitful wind were deposited by millions on the bosom of the water, floating down-stream, as though they, like the swallows, were bent on migrating to some happier land. It was high time to seek the spawning-beds in the upper waters, towards which our course had been all along directed, and, though with somewhat impaired vigour, with an equally strong will, we recommenced our ascent.

“I think there is no creature on whom the lessons of experience are more completely thrown away, than upon one of our race. Continually, for weeks past, we had observed with anxious eye the wiles practised for our destruction. But the moment we left the scene of our temptation, and the associations connected therewith, it seemed as though all previous knowledge and caution, the fruit of experience, had left us also. We had proceeded scarcely a mile on our upward journey, and were tarrying in the Boldside Water, when my companion, rising in pure idleness at the semblance of an errant butterfly whose white tipped wings² failing from weakness had precipitated it on to the surface of the water, found herself securely hooked, and, despite her struggles, rendered weak

¹ I should think so ! In a water I once rented, I killed during six weeks, at an expense of a hundred pounds, forty fish, and was considered to have had good sport. Out of one pool on the same water, eighty fish have been taken at a single haul of the net !

² No more killing fly on Tweed than the “white-tip.”

by her condition, was dragged, as I had seen many a good fish before, hopelessly resisting to the shore. I was not, however, hopeless or despairing as to her fate. Surely, I thought, these men who respect a solitary kelt, because, in time to come, he or she may become a parent, will be infinitely careful of the teeming mother, about at once to produce thousands after her kind. But I was wrong. To my horror, I saw a dreadful instrument, called a gaff, stuck into her side, and in a moment, bleeding and helpless, she was laid on the shingle, where a blow on the head from a round stone speedily released her from her pain. To some indistinct proposition of putting her back into the water as useless, a muttered answer was returned to the effect that she was equally useless there, with that ‘muckle hole in her wame.’ Frightened and horrified, I left the spot, meditating sadly on the inconsistency of sparing the single fish, and slaying the one about to produce thousands.

“The water had again risen, and very many fish were thronging upwards on the same errand. Some, like myself, had come up in pairs ; many, like ‘Hal of the Wynd,’ on their own hand ; and I observed that the predominant feeling was cordial dislike and jealousy between the individual members, at least among the kippers—the male fish—of the ascending crowd. For myself, I shrank moodily in the rear. I was no match for many of the great fish I saw around me, and I laboured under similar disadvantages with themselves in the event of a fight, for a great horny substance like a beak had gradually grown up from the lower jaw, and fitted into a corresponding aperture formed by Nature in the other. We could scarce open our mouths to feed, far less to bite ; and it has always been matter of wonder to me, how the comparatively insignificant wounds received on the spawning-beds have been inflicted, under the difficulties raised by beneficent Nature in defence of our race. It seems as though, aware of the numberless perils we undergo at all stages and periods of our existence, and wherever our habitation for the time may be, she had determined that that most dreadful

instrument, mutual slaughter, should at least be guarded against. The greater salmon may drive away their weaker rivals from the spawning-grounds, may wound and injure them, but it is rare indeed that any are killed. But it was not my fate to reach that long-desired goal. You know best by what vile art—”

“Tring! Tring! Tring!” sounded in my ears. I awoke from my long troublous dream to a consciousness of my real position. I was still in the North-Western train—the friendly guard had not played me false—five pounds’ worth of seats had been at my disposal for half-a-crown—and my talkative intruder, the elderly gentleman in the straw-coloured

paletôt, resolved himself into the straw-enveloped kipper, the victim of my prowess but yesterday afternoon. His pipe changed into the beak he had just referred to, the use of which was for the first time borne upon my mind; and I proceeded to London, if not a sadder, a wiser man. For, though doubtless the history to which I had listened was but the expressed result of my own reflections and experience, I could not but feel, with some gratification, that I had reduced them—vague, and possibly in some places erroneous, as they might be—into form and shape; and as such I offer them, with much deference, to that kindest-hearted and most liberal body of men, the followers of the “gentle art.”

ASRAEL, THE ANGEL OF DEATH.

On a low bed within a narrow room,
She lies, and she has lain through weary years;
Her pale lips, parted, smile—there are no tears
Within the languid eyes, her life’s young bloom
Has faded from her, yet she does not mourn—
When summer quits the year with sweetest flowers
She lets him weep, but leaves him not forlorn;
For, setting fire to all her golden stores,
She, from her pyre, excelling glory pours
Through autumn’s coming to its latest hours.
Is it the memory of joy, a light
From years long set that makes those features bright?
Patient, frail sufferer, is remembrance sweet?
“Oh! memory hide, my past has tearful eyes;
Pain is my pillow, want most near me lies;
But I have heard the tread of unseen feet,
In some deep night, when all the world is still—
He will come in, come in through that low door,
Fearful and beautiful, and crowned and pale,
Israel, God’s angel. He shall stand before
Me, face to face, and say, ‘Thou’rt mine, thou’rt mine!’
My sleeping nurse will start at the new sound
Of my rejoicing. See what I have found.
Thine for one moment, messenger divine,
Israel, archangel, and that sudden thrill
Of triumph shall my troubled life fulfil.”

The EDITOR has great pleasure in announcing that the Hon. Mrs. NORTON’S Story, “OLD SIR DOUGLAS,” will be resumed in the SEPTEMBER Number.